

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



## THESIS

### **CROATIAN CIVIL-MILITARY REFORM AND ITS IMPACT ON NATO MEMBERSHIP**

by

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June 2003

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**CROATIAN CIVIL-MILITARY REFORM AND ITS IMPACT ON NATO  
MEMBERSHIP**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## **ABSTRACT**

Croatia emerged from war in the mid-1990s to embark on a path of accession to Euro-Atlantic institutions. The present thesis examines the connections between civil military and security sector reform, the consolidation of democracy, and the enlargement of NATO as it concerns this most pivotal nation of central and south eastern Europe. The thesis treats the multi-national process of alliance enlargement, relating this theme to the specific set of tasks faced by Croatian policy makers and soldiers in the 1990s and in the present. Further, the study analyzes the civil-military evolution and character of the Croatian armed forces, as well as the broader theme of security sector reform in Croatia, especially since the advent of democratic government in 2000. The thesis concludes with an assessment of the contributions of international organizations and bi-lateral aid, as well as a concise evaluation of the tasks yet to be performed by Croatia in the wake of the Prague 2002 North Atlantic Council series of invitations and what lies ahead in the next round of Alliance Enlargement perhaps in 2007.

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Figure 1. Map of Croatia



Table 1. Croatian Pronunciation Guide

Unique Croatian Letter Guide		
Croatian Letter	Phonetic	Pronunciation
C	ts	ts in cats
Č	ch	ch in cheese
Ć	tch	tch in ketchup
Dž	j	j in jeep
Đ (đ)	dj	dg in dodge
J	y	y in yes
Lj	l'(y)	li in million
Nj	n'(y)	ny in canyon
Š	sh	sh in ship
Ž	zh	s in vision

## I. INTRODUCTION

Croatia seeks to put the violence and bloodshed in the Balkans of the 1990s behind it and join the rest of Europe. The desire to move toward the west has its roots in a Croatian cultural tradition that sees Croatia as an integral part of the west, as well as rejecting the 20<sup>th</sup> century legacy of South Slav Communism. Croatia has historic ties to Catholic Europe through the influence of Italy in Istria and the Dalmatian coast<sup>1</sup> and the ties to Austria and Hungary, which go back to the 11th century. Croatians see Catholicism as a vital part of “the West” and, in the tradition of the Habsburgs, contrasted that with the Orthodox and Islamic faiths practiced in Bosnia and Serbia, which they regard as “Asiatic.” This impression was reinforced by Pope Leo X reference to Croatia as the “Bulwark of Christendom” in 1519.<sup>2</sup> Today, Croatia looks to its future with a desire for freedom, democracy and free market capitalism.

A portion of Croatia’s desire to set its own path and distance itself from the “Balkans” can be attributed to a fear of domination by Serbia, which has happened in the confederations of the South Slavs of 1919, 1945 and 1989. This fear, and the frustration of opponents, was made clear in 1918 when Stjepan Radić stated that Croatia was rushing headlong into joining the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes “like drunken geese in the fog.”<sup>3</sup> Now after the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Croatia advances toward what it sees as a historic return to Europe. This policy is the final piece of the “Thousand Year Dream” of Croatian independence because that it will be peaceful and stable.<sup>4</sup>

All of these political and cultural issues increase Croatia’s desire to be a part of Euro-Atlantic organizations. The North Atlantic Alliance signifies the most important organization to join due to the security assurances of membership. The second chapter

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<sup>1</sup> Figure 1 displays the regions of Croatia.

<sup>2</sup> The link with Hungary goes back to 1097 when the Hungarians defeated Croatia in battle and the Hungarian King coopted the Croats by offering them virtual self-government under a Ban in exchange for recognizing him as king in a Croatian-Hungarian union. Croatia’s link with Italy can be traced to the 12<sup>th</sup> century battles over the Dalmatian Coast and Istria between the Kingdom of Venice and alternately, the Turks and the Hungarians. Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation forged in War*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997. 14, 18, 32.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 119-120.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 275-298.

explores the enlargement of the North Atlantic treaty Organization (NATO) since its very inception. The process of enlargement, the arguments for and against the idea and the implications of such enlargement are examined.

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s brought about new perils and opportunities. The countries of eastern and central Europe sought to join NATO to signify the end of a divided continent and the beginning of a unified and free Europe. The leadership of NATO stated that its door would remain open to new members and to prove the viability of that statement, they created the “Partnership for Peace” (PfP) in 1994 and the Membership Action Program (MAP) in 1999. These programs were established to assist countries in making progress in the military and political reform that could lead to membership. The chapter concludes by reviewing the status of Croatia’s quest for membership.

The third chapter discusses the evolution of the Croatian military and the impact of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of the Ustaše in Croatia during the Second World War brought disaster and an ambiguous legacy after 1945. The Ustaše was a fascist, Quisling regime and Axis ally that militarized Croatian society and used the military and militias to conduct an ethnic cleansing campaign. Their policies and the upheaval of the times brought them into conflict with other elements in Yugoslavia’s civil war.

The communist Partisan movement, led by Josip Broz Tito, emerged from the civil war victorious. Tito created the Yugoslav People’s Army (JNA) to be a multi-ethnic force that would defend the integrity and sovereignty of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). The JNA saw itself as the guarantor of the Yugoslav state. It became a powerful political actor within the SFRY and had a great deal of access to Tito who provided well for the JNA.

Tito’s death in 1980 was a watershed moment for the JNA and Yugoslavia. The most successful of the federal republics renewed their push for independence and the JNA perceived that its *raison d’être* was being destroyed by the secession of Slovenia and Croatia. This further politicized the JNA that had become, over the years, dominated by Serbs. The war in 1991 found Croatia ill-prepared to defend itself. An immediate program to develop its armed forces ensued. This program was combined with a reliance

on paramilitary organizations that have a long history in the Balkans and Croatia in particular. Reliance on paramilitaries, the creation of the armed forces on the foundation of special police and territorial defense units and a covert weapons procurement program all created an environment which overturned any parliamentary oversight. Fighting the war against the Serbs further cemented this executive and political party control of the military without any movement toward democratic control.

The fourth chapter takes on the issues of Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Croatia. The period of independence is divided into three phases. The first is the war years of 1991-1995, second is the period of authoritarian consolidation from 1995-2000, and last is the democratization from 2000 to the present. These three eras of SSR are analyzed from the perspectives of political, institutional, economic and societal dimensions.

The international community has played a significant role in Croatian SSR. Defense assistance from western countries has provided invaluable resources and expertise in bringing SSR. The role of NATO as a donor organization and the aggressive work by Croatia to be fully involved in PfP exercises and other initiatives have had a tremendously positive influence. Countries and international organizations have used conditionality to help push Croatia toward reform, specifically with regard to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and defense reform.

The future for Croatian SSR is based on an expansion of civilian defense expertise and the capacity for creating that expertise. This expertise will provide the type of local ownership over the security sector that will allow a self-policing security sector of educated civilians within the Ministries of Defense and Interior and the Sabor (parliament), in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and in the media. All of these, in combination, will provide the checks and balances necessary to give true democratic oversight.

Membership in NATO is ultimately a political decision and the decision on Croatia's bid for membership will be made on political terms. The ability of Croatia to make major strides in SSR, as it has done and is doing, will give it a much stronger case for membership when the Alliance enlarges once more.

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## **II. CROATIA'S PROSPECTS FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Croatia is seeking membership in the North Atlantic Alliance. The road to this goal has been influenced by the process of NATO enlargement and national history. This chapter will examine the influence that these developments may exert upon Croatia's NATO membership. The first section will briefly outline the basis for NATO enlargement, including Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty and the 1991 Strategic Concept from the Rome Summit. The section will continue by examining the changes that came with the 1994 Brussels Summit and the 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement" and that led to the landmark invitation of three new members at the 1997 Madrid Summit. Acceptance of those members at the 1999 Washington Summit and creation of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) and the invitation of seven more potential members at the 2002 Prague Summit will be reviewed.

The second section will discuss the debate within the Alliance for and against enlargement. These arguments covered topics ranging from the role of the Alliance to speed the transitions to democracy and free markets for aspiring countries to the imperative of maintaining a credible military alliance capable of collective defense. This section outlines the arguments for and against and their relevance to Croatia's case.

Next, the chapter will examine Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the MAP. While the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) of 1991 began the dialogue with the countries of Eastern Europe, the creation of PfP in 1994 was the first concrete step toward making the "Open Door" a reality for countries that wished to join NATO. The experience of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic showed that PfP heretofore alone was not enough to properly prepare a potential new member for the requirements of the Alliance based on the experience of 1995-1999. Thus, in 1999, the Membership Action Plan was established to provide the "advice, assistance and practical support" necessary for taking positive steps on all aspects of NATO membership.<sup>1</sup> These programs are complementary and important for an aspiring member.

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<sup>1</sup> NATO Handbook, NATO Office of Information and Press, Brussels, 2001, 65

The 1997 Madrid Summit and the 2002 Prague Summit invited a total of ten countries to join the Alliance. This section will review the relative merits, political and military, of each of the invited countries. While the enlargement process is highly political and the stated goals are “soft”-- in the sense that exact budget figures and military expenditures will not answer the question of whether a country has made the necessary improvements for membership – it will be instructive to look at the state of these countries at the time of their invitation to later compare them with Croatia.

Finally, the largest section will examine Croatia’s fate in the process of NATO enlargement. First it will look at the late start toward NATO that Croatia made, in large part due to decisions made by President Franjo Tuđman from 1991-1995 and the focus on the Homeland War. The additional requirements levied on Croatia as a part of the Dayton Peace Accords were a further impediment toward partnership and the MAP. Croatia was responsible for the implementation of the accords on behalf of the Bosnian Croats. Therefore, Croatia was tasked with its own political and military reform effort and a portion of the reform and implementation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, tasks with which other countries desiring NATO membership were not burdened.<sup>2</sup> Croatia did not join PfP until May 2000 and didn’t become a part of MAP until 2002. The timeline for meeting the stated criteria for membership, the benefits and liabilities of membership for Croatia and NATO, and the domestic and international obstacles to joining the Alliance will be examined. Based on the invitations made at the Prague Summit, a comparison will be made of relative political, military and economic strengths of the countries in comparison to Croatia. Next, the arguments for and against enlargement will be viewed through the lens of potential Croatian membership. Finally, in an August 2002 memorandum, NATO Secretary General Robertson informed Croatian President Mesić that Croatia needed to implement a series of reforms to be considered for admission.<sup>3</sup> The issues that Robertson brought up are the basic requirements of NATO for new member states and the conclusion will try to outline the steps Croatia must take.

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<sup>2</sup> Ivo Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America’s Bosnia Policy*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000. 180-189.

<sup>3</sup> “NATO Chief tell Croatia’s Mesić ‘Series of Reforms Needed for Membership,’” *Zagreb Hina*, 7 Aug 2002



## **B. THE PROCESS OF NATO ENLARGEMENT**

The idea of enlargement for the North Atlantic Alliance goes back to its earliest days as the original members ensured the possibility for future expansion.<sup>4</sup> The 1949 North Atlantic Treaty allows for the invitation of new European states in Article 10, which states:

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.<sup>5</sup>

Since that time, fourteen countries have joined or have been invited to join the original twelve members (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States). The additional members and their year of accession are Greece and Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955), Spain (1982), and the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (1999). Seven more countries were invited to join the Alliance at the 2002 Prague Summit. Those countries are Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

Each expansion of NATO has encountered resistance from members who have identified various concerns against expansion. Even the movement from the Dunkerque and Brussels treaties to the Washington Treaty brought resistance from the Western Union members. They did not want to admit Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway or Portugal for fear of diluting the U.S. military aid provided to members, but the United States insisted that these states become members. Similar dynamics have occurred with each addition to the Alliance.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In fact, the North Atlantic Alliance is itself an outgrowth of a movement from 1947-1949 that saw the creation of the Western Union (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and United Kingdom) through the Dunkerque and Brussels Treaties and later talks which included the United States and Canada and led to the Washington Treaty of 1949.

<sup>5</sup> North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., 1949, Article 10

<sup>6</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999. 5, 31.

The 1991 Rome Summit ushered in a number of new ideas for NATO. With the end of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, an entirely new outlook for dealing with the countries of Eastern and Central Europe emerged. These ideas included the creation of the NACC to open dialogue between NATO and these countries. NATO's New Strategic Concept emphasized the new opportunities for dialogue and cooperation between NATO countries and the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup> The attitude that Europe and North America could move forward into a relationship of trust and support for the ideas of liberal society was clear in the Rome declaration:

The peoples of North America and the whole of Europe can now join in a community of shared values based on freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. As an agent of change, a source of stability and the indispensable guarantor of its members' security, our Alliance will continue to play a key role in building a new, lasting order of peace in Europe: a Europe of cooperation and prosperity.<sup>8</sup>

The declaration identified the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe<sup>9</sup> as the primary venue in which all nations of Europe and North America would be able to discuss security issues in Europe. The cooperation groundwork was being laid that would lead to further enlargement of the Alliance.

At the 1994 Brussels Summit, the North Atlantic Council publicly confirmed its willingness to expand NATO.

We reaffirm that the Alliance, as provided for in Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, remains open to membership of other European states in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area. We expect and would welcome NATO expansion that would reach to democratic states to our East, as part of an evolutionary process, taking into account political and security developments in the whole of Europe.<sup>10</sup>

The meeting in Brussels also saw the creation of PfP, which will be covered later.

As NATO moved step by step toward enlargement, it conducted a "Study on

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<sup>7</sup> North Atlantic Council, New Strategic Concept, paragraphs 28-29, 8 Nov 1991

<sup>8</sup> North Atlantic Council, Rome Declaration, paragraph 2, 8 Nov 1991

<sup>9</sup> This later came to be known as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

<sup>10</sup> North Atlantic Council, Brussels Declaration, paragraph 12, 11 Jan 1994

NATO Enlargement” presented in 1995. This study identified seven rationales for enlargement:

- 1) Encouraging and supporting democratic reforms, including civilian and democratic control;
- 2) Fostering in new members of the Alliance the patterns and habits of cooperation, consultation and consensus building which characterize relations among current Allies;
- 3) Promoting good-neighborly relations, which would benefit all countries in the Euro-Atlantic area, both member and non-members of NATO;
- 4) Emphasizing common defense and extending its benefits and increasing transparency in defense planning and military budgets, thereby reducing the likelihood of instability that might be engendered by an exclusively national approach to defense policies.
- 5) Reinforcing the tendency toward integration and cooperation in Europe based on shared democratic values and thereby curbing the countervailing tendency towards disintegration along ethnic and territorial lines;
- 6) Strengthening the Alliance’s ability to contribute to European and international security, including through peacekeeping activities under the responsibility to the OSCE and peacekeeping operations under the authority of the UN Security Council as well as other new missions; [and]
- 7) Strengthening and broadening the Trans-Atlantic partnership.<sup>11</sup>

These rationales are the basis for the programs that NATO has established to keep its door open, namely the Partnership for Peace and the Membership Action Plan.

The 1997 Madrid Summit brought invitations to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin talks with NATO about membership. And just prior to the 1999 Washington Summit, those three countries were officially made Alliance members, and to ensure that the door remained open for other countries the MAP was created.<sup>12</sup> There was a great deal of speculation about how another round of enlargement would proceed, with the extremes being the zero option or the “Big Bang.” It turned out to be more like the latter than the former as at the 2002 Prague Summit, seven countries were invited to become members.

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<sup>11</sup> The numbering is the author’s. North Atlantic Council, Study on NATO Enlargement, Brussels, 3 Sep 1995, paragraph 3.

<sup>12</sup> These three countries officially became members on 12 March 1999 in a ceremony at the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri.

### C. ARGUMENTS FOR ENLARGEMENT

The arguments in favor of expansion of the Alliance run from a desire to promote democratization, free market prosperity, and constructive solutions to border and minority issues to a fear of a resurgent Russia to a desire to prevent competition amongst European powers to a desire to prevent another division of Europe. The first argument was the public position of the Clinton Administration in its support of NATO enlargement, putting the best face on the issues without wanting to provoke Russia.

The second argument, in many forms, dealt with the potential risk of Russian neo-imperialism and the continued need for NATO to remain to counterbalance it. To prevent that threat from disrupting democratic trends in Eastern Europe or beginning another European war, the protection of NATO must be extended. Senator Jesse Helms argued that “A central strategic rationale for expanding NATO must be to hedge against the possible return of a nationalist or imperialist Russia, with 20,000 nuclear missiles and ambitions of restoring its lost empire.”<sup>13</sup>

The call for expansion can also be argued from the standpoint of preventing the resurgence of “Great Power competition” between Russia, Germany, Britain and France. This has been the history of the continent and without a framework to assure peace, these countries might turn to the ideas of their past to gain prominence. Former Director of the National Security Agency, General William Odom, US Army retired, was an advocate for this position, stating that “Central Europe will again become the scene of some, if not all, of the perverse dynamics of the interwar period unless NATO enlarges to preempt them.”<sup>14</sup> In general terms, the argument is that if a power vacuum exists, it will be filled in and the best way to fill that vacuum is with NATO.

Another argument in favor of enlargement is the desire to prevent the creation of competing alliance blocks. If the countries of Eastern and Central Europe are left in a security void, they will do what they did in 1919 that is; negotiate mutual defense treaties to defend themselves against each other. British expert Jonathan Eyal stated clearly the German fear of regional alliances in central Europe in this statement:

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<sup>13</sup> Yost, 108-109

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 109

The security void which had been created in the heart of the continent would ultimately have to be filled by someone...Bereft of any serious institutional affiliation, the countries of the region would begin to construct their own security arrangements. What would these arrangements have looked like? Very much like the ones which had already plunged Europe into two world wars this century: Poland and Romania...against Russia, Slovakia and Romania against Hungary, and the Czechs with the Poles in order to deflect Germany's influence. Had that happened, Germany would have then been faced with the option of either participating in central Europe's local alliances or reaching a deal with Moscow in order to keep the region under control—precisely the choices which previous generations of German politicians faced, with such disastrous consequences. For Bonn, therefore, the only solution was to work for the integration of these countries into both NATO and the European Union..."<sup>15</sup>

The history of Europe suggests that these competing alliance blocks are destabilizing and will lead to war. This situation can be avoided by bringing these countries into a large multi-lateral alliance such as NATO that ensures the security of Europe.

#### **D. ARGUMENTS AGAINST ENLARGEMENT**

From 1991 to 1999, there were many arguments against enlargement of the Alliance. They varied from sides of the Atlantic and political beliefs. The effect of the "Big Bang" at the Prague Summit, however, has effectively muted those arguments. And the "Big Bang" was made possible due to the change in security environment and the identification of threats after the attacks of 11 September 2001. The United States and other Alliance members saw the need to bring Eastern European countries into the fold to enlist their support in helping defeat global terrorism and also to help prevent the conditions that might lead to terrorist cells operating in those countries.

The first argument against enlargement was the fear that expansion of NATO would weaken it to the point of paralysis. This fear is based on critics of the consensus style of decision-making within the Alliance. When consensus is the standard, the increased number of members and the more varied points of view seem to make gaining the consensus necessary for the Alliance to act in any situation more difficult. This need for consensus has brought about the charge that there will be a dilution of Alliance

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 111

cohesion and effectiveness.<sup>16</sup>

The second argument against enlargement is that the wrong criteria are being used. These critics of the Clinton administration in 1995 believed that the primary requirement should be a country's ability to make a positive contribution to the defense of NATO. If they are unable to do that, the criteria of democratization and civilian control of the armed forces don't mean very much. This continues to be an issue within the debate. The belief that the new members or candidates for membership lack the requisite skills of effective armed forces and, instead of contributing, they detract militarily from the Alliance.<sup>17</sup>

The question of the credibility of Article 5 comes up as the Alliance expands. "Are the West Europeans prepared to make Article 5 commitments only because the putative Russian threat is now minimal, and because the United States is seen in both Eastern and Western Europe as the ultimate guarantor of the Alliance's collective defense pledges?"<sup>18</sup> If Article 5 defense of the Alliance is not credible, the Alliance will ultimately fall apart or morph into strictly a political entity akin to the United Nations, with a minimal defense role. Either one of these developments would serve neither old nor new Alliance members who have come to rely on NATO as the security guarantor in Europe. A role change for the alliance due to lack of credibility would leave the security void that was mentioned in the earlier arguments.

Another argument against enlargement has been the fear that the United States is trying to use an expanded NATO as a vehicle for asserting its domination of Europe. This is a view often expressed by the French. To many of them

NATO enlargement signifies, in the words of Paul-Marie de la Gorce, 'an extension of the zone that it [America] wanted to protect and ensure control over,' an expression of 'the hegemonic will of the United States

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<sup>16</sup> Yost, 106. Mary H. Cooper, "Is the Alliance still Viable?" CQ Researcher, 28 Feb 2003, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre2003022801&type=toc&num=4&> (accessed 5 May 2003). Ronald Asmus and Charles Grant, "Debate: Can NATO remain an effective military and political alliance if it keeps growing?" NATO Review, Spring 2002. Elke Krahmann, Terry Terriff and Mark Webber, "Who's Next?: The Ongoing Story of NATO Enlargement," ESRC 'One Europe or Several?' Programme, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Ronald Asmus and Charles Grant, "Debate: Can NATO remain an effective military and political alliance if it keeps growing?" NATO Review, Spring 2002.

<sup>18</sup> Yost, 130

over the Old Continent.’ President Francois Mitterrand evidently interpreted U.S. interest in enlargement as an attempt by the United States ‘to extend its influence in Eastern Europe, at low cost and to the detriment of the countries of Western Europe, which, moreover, are bearing the burden of most of the economic aid to these countries.’<sup>19</sup>

This argument is still one that has been used by critics who fear U.S. hegemony in any international forum. In an analogous situation, the United Nations’ debate over war in Iraq in 2002-2003 has been described as a truly being about the role of the United States in the world and what countries will be able to wield influence to stop a hegemonic power.

The invitation to join the Alliance extended to seven countries in November 2002 demonstrates that the arguments against enlargement have lost. The questions then become what countries will be invited to join and when. The answer to those questions will help shape the future of Europe. The “New Europe” of an expanded North Atlantic Alliance and European Union will not have the same centers of power and influence as the “Old Europe” dominated by France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The terrorist attacks since September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 have refocused the issue of collective security on a different enemy, one that all the countries of the Alliance will have to address together. The knowledge that the United States holds the keys to acceptance in NATO makes it very important for any country that wants to be seriously considered for membership to curry favor with the United States. That will, in the short term at least, bring about a block of Central and Eastern European countries that within Alliance politics align closely with the United States. Thus the emerging Europe will continue to maintain vital links to the United States.

## **E. IMPLICATIONS**

There are four key implications for NATO enlargement. First is the potential impact on cohesion of the Alliance. Next are the implications for the “wanna be’s” who are not included. Third is the risk of an unnecessary confrontation with Russia. And finally, there is the issue of taking aboard new collective defense obligations.

The potential impact on NATO cohesion is important. NATO is a consensus organization and therefore requires unanimous agreement to be able to act in a situation.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 113-114

An Alliance that was a balancing act with 16 members has already expanded to 19 members and with the invitations from the 2002 Summit, it will grow to 26 members. It may be quite difficult to gain the support necessary to act as an alliance, even perhaps for collective defense. Viewing the positions taken in the North Atlantic Council (NAC) during the debate in early 2003 to defend Turkey against possible Iraqi attack, one could draw the conclusion that France is the sole problem and thus moving the debate to the Defense Planning Committee will solve contentious issues. It is more likely however, that any member might use similar tactics and since no other members have voluntarily absented themselves from the integrated military structure, that member could effectively block such an Alliance measure.<sup>20</sup> That argument flies in the face of the history of consensus within the Alliance, even in the decision reached above. The strong incentives to maintain the consensus approach to decision-making will continue to lead countries to compromise within NATO. If there comes a time when consensus is unable to be reached, it may force the Alliance to look toward other methods for decision-making but it doesn't seem likely.

The second question concerns the fate of nations that are pursuing membership, but have not been accepted. There is a fear that countries might feel they are permanently excluded from the Alliance and move away from the democratic gains that brought them to desire membership in the first place. This fear has been well addressed by members of the Alliance that have repeatedly assured aspiring countries that there is and will remain an "Open Door" for further membership. Secretaries of State Christopher and Albright continually hit upon this theme and the invitation of 10 countries within 5 years certainly confirms this policy. The Prague Declaration stated as well that the door will remain open to other countries.<sup>21</sup> President George W. Bush said this of further enlargement:

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<sup>20</sup> In fact, Belgium and Germany also delayed the process of considering the measure in the NAC but both countries came to support the position during deliberations in the DPC. NATO Secretary General Robertson has argued that the Alliance moved relatively quickly to resolve the issue and was able to do so with consensus of the DPC. He further stated that NATO retains the political will to use military force when necessary as demonstrated by actions in the Balkans, anti-terrorist operations in the Mediterranean, the deployment of AWACS aircraft, anti-missile systems and chem.-bio defense units to Turkey. The last issue of defense of Turkey could be agreed to after only 11 days. This shows the ability to gain consensus despite difficult circumstances. Remarks by Lord Robertson to the U.S. Atlantic Council, Washington D.C. 5 May 2003. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030505b.htm> (accessed 5 May 2003).

<sup>21</sup> North Atlantic Council, Prague Declaration, paragraph 2, 21 Nov 2002



Because America supports a more united Europe, we strongly support the enlargement of NATO, now and in the future. Every European democracy that seeks NATO membership and is ready to share in NATO's responsibilities should be welcome in our Alliance. The enlargement of NATO is good for all who join us. The standards for membership are high, and they encourage the hard work of political and economic and military reform.<sup>22</sup>

In other words, the door remains open for countries that are currently left out. Croatia falls into the category of “not yet” along with Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). These three countries have pledged closer cooperation to work toward membership for each.<sup>23</sup>

The third implication is that NATO may be tempting confrontation with Russia. Russia may believe that it is being isolated from Europe as the countries to its west become Alliance members and the Alliance moves east. This can be seen as redrawing the division in Europe, only this time it is much closer to Russia's borders and the Alliance has become larger and more powerful. In Russian eyes, this larger Alliance is a destabilizing force. Further, the primacy of NATO for European security in western European minds means that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is not the central security forum. The Russians see this as a threat because they have a voice within OSCE but they could only watch as NATO considered issues of European security.<sup>24</sup> The Alliance took measures to provide the Russians some confidence in the non-threatening nature of NATO enlargement by trying to foster a special relationship with Russia, in part by creating first the Permanent Joint Council in 1997 and then the NATO-Russia Council in 2002 to discuss issues and avoid conflict. Another major factor that has allowed for greater expansion is the post-September 11<sup>th</sup> environment and the willingness of Russian President Putin to allow the accession of a number of countries that had previously been the subject of bitter debate (the Baltic republics). The evidence of the Prague Summit is that Russia will not act as a barrier to

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<sup>22</sup> George W. Bush speech to Atlantic Student Summit, Prague, 20 Nov 2002

<sup>23</sup> Jolyon Naegele, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “NATO: Albania, Croatia, Macedonia Pledge Closer Cooperation”, 22 Nov 2002 <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2002/11/22112002173508.asp> (accessed 3/5/2003)

<sup>24</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999, 198.

enlargement, at least not to the membership of the seven current invited countries or the remaining three applicant countries.

The fourth implication is that NATO is taking in additional members without properly addressing the seriousness of the obligation to provide for the collective defense of these countries. Collective defense has played an extremely minor role in the discussions that have occurred over the last two rounds of Alliance enlargement. The most obvious reason for this lack of discussion is the third implication above, a desire not to unnecessarily provoke Russia, which would most often be identified as the threat to an Alliance country. The other issue that goes into this is that currently Russia is too weak to pose a credible conventional threat to a member country.

#### **F. PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE (PFP)**

The Partnership for Peace was an initiative introduced at the Brussels Summit of the North Atlantic Council in January 1994 to create a framework from which NATO could work with non-NATO countries in the Euro-Atlantic region as partners. As stated before, PFP grew out of the dialogue that began with NACC in 1991. The idea behind PFP is that NATO and partner countries working together will enhance the security and stability of Europe. The PFP framework document called for the pursuit of the following objectives:

- a. Facilitation of transparency in national defense planning and budgeting processes;
- b. Ensuring democratic control of defense forces;
- c. Maintenance of the capability and readiness to contribute, subject to constitutional considerations, to operations under the authority of the UN and/or the responsibility of the CSCE;
- d. The development of cooperative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training, and exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations, and other as may subsequently be agreed;
- e. The development, over the longer term, of forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> North Atlantic Council, Partnership for Peace Framework Document, Brussels, 1994, paragraph 3.

PfP uses defense-related cooperation as a springboard to forging stronger political and military ties. With these stronger ties, the Alliance hopes, a country will embrace democratic values fully and continue the reforms that it has begun.

Any country wishing to join the Partnership for Peace must first sign the Framework Document. This Framework Document identifies the goals of PfP. The signers reaffirm their political commitment to democratic societies, international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, respect of sovereignty, rejection of force and desire to resolve disputes through peaceful means. After signing, the country will submit a Presentation Document to NATO describing its plan to achieve necessary political goals, the military and other assets that will be available for Partnership purposes, and the specific areas of cooperation that the Partner wishes to pursue jointly with NATO.<sup>26</sup>

After reviewing the Presentation Document with the aspirant country, that country and NATO work together to develop an Individual Partnership Program (IPP). The IPP specifies the political aims, the assets to be made available to PfP, areas of cooperation and the objectives and activities to be pursued in those areas. As a country participates, it will meet with NATO for the Planning and Review Process (PARP). PfP/PARP is a program tailored for each country that allows a country to move toward interoperability with NATO and conduct necessary preparations for possible future membership. Countries that choose to closely integrate with NATO can, through PARP, biannually exchange information on defense plans and budgets and identify areas to improve military interoperability with NATO for peacekeeping, humanitarian operations and search and rescue.<sup>27</sup>

#### **G. MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN (MAP)**

The Membership Action Plan was developed in 1999 to help countries that wish to become Alliance members in their preparations for accession. The genesis for MAP came from the difficult experiences of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in meeting the requirements of the Alliance. NATO wanted to provide a better support system for countries making the necessary reforms for membership and to reassure other

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<sup>26</sup> NATO Handbook, NATO Office of Information and Press, Brussels, 2001, 69.

<sup>27</sup> Sean Kay, NATO and the Future of European Security, Oxford, Rowman & Littlefield, 1998, 72-4.

countries that enlargement would continue. In order to give aspiring nations a more comprehensive explanation of the requirements and potential impact beyond the ministries of foreign affairs and defense, the MAP provides “advice, assistance and practical support on all aspects of NATO membership.”<sup>28</sup> Jeffrey Simon identifies the specific civil-military conditions that must be met for membership as: a clear constitutional or legal division of authority between president and government; parliamentary oversight of the military through budgetary control; peacetime oversight of general staff and military commanders from civilian defense ministers; and military effectiveness through a restoration of prestige, trustworthiness and accountability.<sup>29</sup>

Despite the inclusion of seven of the nine 2001 MAP participants in the expansion announced at the Prague Summit, participation in MAP does not assure future membership. Nor is it meant to be used as a checklist on the way to membership. MAP provides a wide range of activities that countries can participate in to strengthen their candidacy, and the candidate country will receive feedback and advice from NATO concerning its preparations for membership.

MAP is not meant to replace PfP, but instead to be a complementary program. It is based on the principle of self-differentiation, in that countries are free to choose the elements of MAP which are best suited to their circumstances. Countries submit an Annual National Program to identify the steps they are taking in a variety of areas to prepare for membership. The North Atlantic Council meets with each aspiring country to discuss progress that has been made. Four key areas stand out when reviewing a country’s progress: defense and military issues; resource issues; security issues; and legal issues.

## **H. INVITATIONS TO NEW MEMBERS**

At the Madrid Summit in 1997, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited to become new members so that membership in the Alliance would take effect by the Washington Summit in 1999. This summit was a celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of NATO.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>29</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *NATO Enlargement and Central Europe: A Study in Civil-Military Relations*, Washington, D.C: National Defense University Press, 1996, 26-7.

Today, we invite the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks with NATO. Our goal is to sign the Protocol of Accession at the time of the Ministerial meetings in December 1997 and to see the ratification process completed in time for membership to become effective by the 50th anniversary of the Washington Treaty in April 1999. During the period leading to accession, the Alliance will involve invited countries, to the greatest extent possible and where appropriate, in Alliance activities, to ensure that they are best prepared to undertake the responsibilities and obligations of membership in an enlarged Alliance. We direct the Council in Permanent Session to develop appropriate arrangements for this purpose.<sup>30</sup>

The creation of MAP at the Washington Summit affirmed the principle of a continued open door to the Alliance.

At the 2002 Prague Summit, a similar welcoming statement was made to invite seven more countries to join the Alliance.

Today, we have decided to invite Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia to begin accession talks to join our Alliance. We congratulate them on this historic occasion, which so fittingly takes place in Prague. The accession of these new members will strengthen security for all in the Euro-Atlantic area, and help achieve our common goal of a Europe whole and free, united in peace and by common values. NATO's door will remain open to European democracies willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, in accordance with Article 10 of the Washington Treaty.<sup>31</sup>

Key to these statements is the commitment to expand the Alliance to "willing and able" European democracies. That offers hope for the Vilnius 10 countries that have been left behind and, perhaps, for others that have not yet formally requested membership.

Of the seven countries invited to join NATO at Prague, five of them are relatively insignificant militarily (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia). "The problem...is that despite the willingness of all these aspirants and especially those in the Baltics to support the Alliance in general and the United States in particular, these

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<sup>30</sup> North Atlantic Council, Madrid Declaration, paragraph 6.

<sup>31</sup> North Atlantic Council, Prague Declaration, paragraph 2.

countries have limited resources, populations and capabilities.”<sup>32</sup> The limited capabilities that these countries bring to the alliance likely played a large role in bringing in Romania and Bulgaria so that “At least one country either of some size or geostrategic location [could] make this round of enlargement look like a meaningful endeavour from a military point of view.”<sup>33</sup> However, political and economic difficulties in both of those countries make the point that “soft” goals can be manipulated by the Alliance when it serves the Alliance’s interests.<sup>34</sup>

## **I. RELEVANCE TO CROATIA**

Croatia hopes to be a part of the next round of NATO enlargement that may be considered for 2007. NATO’s continued willingness to keep its door open is very important to Croatia, which got a late start on joining the institutions of Europe (when compared to the other countries of eastern and central Europe) due to the homeland war and the instability the war caused. The negative impression that many European countries have of the Balkans as a region contributes to the Balkan countries being put in the background. The decisions and biases of NATO countries when determining how to deal with the instability in the Balkans in the 1990s created many obstacles for Croatia moving toward the rest of Europe. Certainly, Croatian policies that emphasized nationalism and bordered on authoritarianism did little to help its cause.

It is important to get an understanding of the history of Croatia’s journey toward the North Atlantic Alliance. Tito’s death in 1980; the rotating presidency among the six

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<sup>32</sup> James M. Goldgeier, “Not When but Who,” NATO Review, Spring 2002  
<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue1/art2.html> (accessed 1/24/2003)

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. Significantly, Goldgeier does not point to the specific military capabilities that Romania and Bulgaria bring to the Alliance as the reason for their admission. The focus on size and location is an attempt to identify advantages to the Alliance that make up for limited military capabilities. In his book on the subject, Goldgeier writes of opponents fear that added Eastern European states with limited military capabilities would dilute NATO’s ability to deal effectively with future problems in Europe or elsewhere. James M. Goldgeier, *Not whether but when: the U.S. Decision to enlarge NATO*, Washington D.C., Brookings Institution Press, 1999, 7.

<sup>34</sup> Romania sought from the first enlargement discussion to portray itself as the “Poland of the South.” Romanian diplomats emphasized its strategic weight, regional importance and linguistic-cultural bond to Western Europe. It also put its potential membership in terms of the Alliance showing a true commitment to Southern Europe, especially as the conflict in the Balkans showed the importance of bringing stability to the region. Ron Asmus, *Opening NATO’s Door: How the Alliance remade itself for a New Era*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2002. Clay Clemens, “The strategic and political consequences of NATO enlargement,” in *Europe in Change: Two tiers or two speeds?* James Sperling (ed), Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1999.

republics of Yugoslavia after his death; and the fall of the Berlin Wall all led for calls for independence from five of the eight federal units.<sup>35</sup> In April 1990, free elections were held in Slovenia, followed soon by elections in Croatia. These were the first free elections in the history of Yugoslavia. Slovenia and Croatia were two of those five federal units that wanted independence and both declared their independence on 25 June 1991.

The elections held in Croatia in the spring of 1990 brought Franjo Tuđman to the Presidency. He was an authoritarian leader and his party, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), had gained 69% of the parliament seats despite only receiving 42% of the popular vote due to an oddly designed electoral system.<sup>36</sup> The nationalist HDZ party and Tuđman sought to bring back the icons of Croatian history. These icons (like the Croatian coat of arms) brought out fears of societal division that were played upon by Serbian leaders in Croatia and in Serbia. Tuđman never properly addressed these fears to the public. In fact, he made them worse through the wording of a new constitution that proclaimed that Croatia was “the national state of the Croatian nation” and that “The Croatian language and Latin script shall be in official use in the Republic of Croatia.”<sup>37</sup> The Serb minority believed that discrimination was inherent in these constitutional statements.

Serb fears were based on Tuđman’s nationalist agenda that sought to raise Croats to dominance within the country. This was done in a variety of ways. Tuđman emphasized that money earned in Croatia would remain in Croatia, a reference to the feeling of economic hardship that the Croats felt in supporting poorer republics in Yugoslavia, Kosovo particularly. He established a Croatian news agency to counter the

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<sup>35</sup> The eight federal units included the republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia and the two autonomous regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Branka Magas, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia Tracking the Breakup 1980-92*, Verso, London, 1993, 336

<sup>36</sup> Prior to the elections, the communists, who were then in power, established an electoral system that was not proportional to maximize their representation in the Sabor (Croatian parliament). They did not take into account the support from émigrés and the amount of money that the HDZ would be able to raise. This support from Croats abroad swung the election in favor of the nationalists. John Mueller, “The Banality of “Ethnic War”: Yugoslavia and Rwanda”, *Annual Meeting of American Political Science Association*, 31 Aug-3 Sep 2000, 6. Warren Zimmerman, *Origins of a Catastrophe*, New York: Times Books, 1996. 71.

<sup>37</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, 1990, Section I and Section II, Article 12

influence of the Belgrade based Tanjug agency. He sought to create monuments to all who had sacrificed themselves in war trying to create the Croatian homeland. He spoke of the Independent Croatian state of the Second World War in generous terms. While he acknowledged that it was a “fascist crime,” Tuđman identified it as an expression of “the Croatian nation’s historic desire for an independent homeland.” In other words, crimes committed against other ethnic groups during the war were distorted manifestations of a sound idea of nationalism. Tuđman’s impulse for doing this was to gain the support of a large Croatian Diaspora, whose money contributed greatly to his election. Another aspect of this nationalism was the purge of Serbs from governmental positions. With all these factors, it is understandable that Serbs believed they would be a weak and defenseless minority in Tuđman’s Croatia.<sup>38</sup>

Croatian Serbs tried to secede from Croatia and were supported by the policies of Serbian President Slobodan Milošević. Included in those policies came a war with Croatia that involved the Yugoslav People’s Army and paramilitary forces that lasted until 1995. The Homeland War forced Croatia to build an army from scratch in order to defend itself from this aggression. Building that army, which grew from special police units and the national guard, and having to have that army fight for the preservation of the country, put a great deal of strain on the civil-military relationship. In fact, it distorted greatly the relationship between the armed forces and elected officials who are to provide oversight. The need to quickly establish a force that could defend the nation overcame other thoughts in its design. As one can imagine, this defense buildup and war have greatly colored the ability to gain control of the military establishment in Croatia and seek reform. Croatia’s responsibilities in helping implement the Dayton Peace Accords and the poor record of the Tuđman government in following through with those responsibilities cast an unfavorable light on Croatia in the eyes of western governments. This lack of reform and lack of a commitment to stability and peace with its neighbors have been major stumbling blocks to movement toward NATO.

Croatia first announced its desire to participate in PfP in January 1994 through Foreign Minister Mate Granic. This desire had to wait for an end to the war with Serbia,

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<sup>38</sup> Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation forged in War*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997, 222-3.



the death of President Tuđman, and certain reforms before NATO would take it seriously. The end of the war was difficult to achieve. The Serbs controlled nearly one-third of Croatian territory from 1991 to 1995. UN forces were sent as peacekeepers and Cyrus Vance and David Owen negotiated a fragile peace that collapsed under resistance from all parties. In August and September 1995, the Croats and Muslims conducted the Western Offensive to regain the Krajina and parts of Central Bosnia that had been controlled by Serbs from previous attacks. The success of this offensive changed the dynamic in Bosnia and led to a window of opportunity for diplomatic negotiations that brought about the Dayton Accords. Tuđman died in December 1999 and his death ushered in a new era of politics in Croatia as an opposition alliance defeated the HDZ at the polls.<sup>39</sup>

The elections of January and February 2000 brought about the new government of President Stjepan Mesić and Prime Minister Ivica Račan. This Croatian Administration identified membership in NATO as a key foreign policy goal.<sup>40</sup> Croatia officially applied for integration into the PfP back in May 1997, but it was after these elections showed the promise of reform that on 25 May 2000, Croatia was admitted into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and PfP as the 26<sup>th</sup> partner. The government knew as well that becoming a part of MAP was essential to Croatia's future.

In order to achieve that strategic goal, Croatia undertook the appropriate organizational changes in the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and established "The Interagency Working Group for Cooperation Between Croatia and NATO" consisting of representatives from ten key ministries and the Office of the President with the main purpose of producing the Annual National Plan (ANP) as a basis for MAP.<sup>41</sup>

The government has tackled three specific areas that were issues for the Alliance with President Tuđman. Those issues were: ending the conflict with Bosnia-

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<sup>39</sup> Nick Thorpe, "Analysis: Contemplating Life without Tudjman," 11 Dec 1999, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/526115.stm> (accessed 16 Mar 2003)

<sup>40</sup> Ivica Račan, "Making up for lost time," NATO Review, Summer-Autumn 2000 Vol.48 No.2, 8.

<sup>41</sup> Zeljko Cepanec, Croatian Membership in NATO: One of the Crucial Prerequisites for Stabilization of Southeastern Europe, MA Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, 2002, 85.

Herzegovina; support of the international war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY); and the attitude concerning the return of Croatian Serb refugees to Croatia. Progress on those issues helped bring about the decision by NATO foreign ministers meeting in Reykjavik to invite Croatia to join the process of the Membership Action Plan, on 14 May 2002.<sup>42</sup> The first Annual National Program report to NATO was due in the autumn of 2002.

Croatia has worked hard to prove its worth in PfP and MAP. It has provided support for peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone and Ethiopia/Eritrea and also hosted the 2002 PfP fire fighting exercise Taming the Dragon. This regional exercise brought “1100 personnel from 19 countries...including every country in South-East Europe...All in all, “Taming the Dragon” was the largest civilian Partnership for Peace exercise ever. It was an extraordinary success, not least because Croatia did an outstanding job in the organization and conduct of the exercise.”<sup>43</sup>

While this support of PfP and MAP is laudable, a number of reforms were identified as necessary for Croatia to join the Alliance: the reduction of the armed forces from a wartime size to a peacetime one; education of the officer corps; standardization of equipment; modernization of the armed forces; an end to the politicization of the armed forces; an independent judiciary; and good relations with minorities and neighbors.<sup>44</sup>

There are significant hurdles that Croatia must overcome to meet all of these requirements, but they are similar to the problems encountered by other countries that have been accepted into the Alliance over the past six years. Despite numerous differences in post-communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, a similar pattern of problems has emerged. The problems include: the loss of rationale and ideology in the armed forces with the end of communism; massive force reductions brought about by political, economic and geo-strategic concerns; a lack of civilian oversight, in part due to the fall of the communist bureaucracy, and in part due to a lack of defense expertise;

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<sup>42</sup> Expand NATO homepage <http://www.expandnato.org/croatianato.html> (accessed 21 Feb 2003)

<sup>43</sup> NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson speech to international conference on “Regional Stability and Cooperation: NATO, Croatia and South-East Europe,” Zagreb, Croatia 24 June 02

<sup>44</sup> Chapter IV provides specific examples of attempt to educate, modernize and de-politicize the Croatian armed forces. Zagreb Hina, “Robertson Encourages Croatia to Modernise Army,” 24 June 2002

young officer attrition due to poor conditions and inability to properly recognize good performance; military leadership resistance to change and attempts to protect and retain elements of the armed forces from reform; lack of budget transparency; and confusion and apathy concerning service in the armed forces that defeats attempts to move from conscription based to volunteer based personnel systems.<sup>45</sup>

If the country was able to overcome those problems, what might be the benefits and liabilities of Croatian membership in NATO? The benefits to Croatia, surprisingly, do not rest overwhelmingly with military support. Instead it is for economics and “soft power” issues like influence and shared values. Benefits to Croatia include: economic foreign direct investment and the change in perceptions that will bring concerning investment; implementation of mature democratic policies; and the feeling of belonging to a circle of countries with shared values.<sup>46</sup>

The benefits to NATO from admission of Croatia are many: an increase in the security and stability zone into South-East Europe; alliance membership covering an important geo-strategic location; the use or availability of Croatian military infrastructure, especially naval bases; and the interoperability of a Croatian military already well versed in U.S. programs and training standards.<sup>47</sup>

The earlier arguments given for enlargement of the alliance generally apply to Croatia as well. In addition, Croatia has focused on the professionalization of the armed forces with particular emphasis on English language training and fully funding officers to American and German schools. The professional education, when combined with the successful operations with NATO during the war against Serbia, shows the ability of Croatian forces to interoperate as well as any of the other applicants.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Chris Donnelly, “Military matters: Reform realities,” NATO Review, Autumn 2002. 13-15.

<sup>46</sup> Cepanec, 94-96

<sup>47</sup> Croatian membership in NATO would create a land bridge from the central European member countries (Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia) to the Mediterranean. In addition, the Croatian coasts boasts four naval bases (Ploce, Pula, Sibenik and Split), refer to figure 1, that would provide excellent sea points of embarkation onto amphibious or transport ships for an expeditionary force moving from central Europe on an “out of area mission.” Ibid, 96-99. Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – The Balkans, “Navy, Croatia”, [http://80-www4.janes.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/search97/vs.vts?action=View&VdkVgwKey=/content1/janesdata/sent/balksu/croas130.htm&collection=current&Prod\\_Name=BALK&QueryZip=Croatia](http://80-www4.janes.com.libproxy.nps.navy.mil/search97/vs.vts?action=View&VdkVgwKey=/content1/janesdata/sent/balksu/croas130.htm&collection=current&Prod_Name=BALK&QueryZip=Croatia) (accessed 15 May 2003)

<sup>48</sup> Cepanec, 88-89

While the general arguments against expansion have essentially been repudiated by the “Big Bang” at Prague, there are some other issues that hold back Croatia. First of all is the issue of human rights violations during the Homeland War and the need to turn the suspected war criminals over to the ICTY. Second is the need to reduce force size so that modernization can be pursued. Along with that modernization will come a NATO-interoperable system of weapons. The continued movement toward democratic, civilian control of the armed forces is the final issue.

The specter of Serbian instability has in the past drawn Croatia back from a future as a part of a new Europe to a past where Europe isolates the Balkans and lumps all the countries in the region together as violent and unstable. The assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic on 12 March 2003 has brought about a host of negative parallels with other times in history that could influence the prospects for Croatia’s membership in NATO.<sup>49</sup> The ability of Serbia to deal with the disorder and violence associated with organized crime may taint Croatia’s bid to become a part of the North Atlantic Alliance if potential instability from the state of emergency and the influence of organized crime in the region cross over the border into Croatia.

Another issue that will have bearing on the support of the United States for Croatia’s membership is the position that the Croatian Government takes on the issue of extradition of Americans to the International Criminal Court (ICC). In 2002, the United States began to make bilateral treaties with countries that they will not extradite U.S. citizens to the ICC. This American policy is in direct contrast to the European Union policy on the ICC. Croatian leaders are torn in their decision concerning the treaty because they risk losing the support of the EU member countries for accession or losing the support of the United States. Loss of U.S. support would mean loss of all military assistance and perhaps withdraw of U.S. support to Croatia’s candidacy to NATO.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Michael T. Kauffman, “Killings Shaped Serbia and Also Roiled Europe”, *New York Times*, 13 Mar 2003, A10.

<sup>50</sup> “Croatia wants ICC Exemption solution to be in line with EU advice,” Hina News Agency, Zagreb, 29 May 2003. “Peace Studies Centre slams U.S. Ambassador’s pressure on Croatia,” Hina News Agency, Zagreb, 16 May 2003. “Croatian Premier refuses to be drawn on International Criminal Court,” Hina News Agency, Zagreb, 28 May 2003.

## **J. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed a number of issues regarding NATO's Open Door and its relevance to Croatia. It has identified the background and processes for NATO's enlargement and the key roles that Partnership for Peace and the Membership Action Plan play. It has covered the arguments for and against enlargement and some of the implications for this policy. It identified the invitations to membership made at NATO Summits in Madrid and Prague to new countries. And finally, it examined how Croatia fits into the picture with the enlargement of NATO.

Croatia fits easily into the template for enlargement that has been set by the Prague Summit. Continued political and military reform would make Croatia the most promising of the remaining candidates for membership. As stated above, the key issues are political and they include Croatian compliance with the ICTY, the European impression of the level of instability in the Balkans and whether Croatia's inclusion in the Alliance will provide more stability or expose the Alliance to instability and, finally, the ability of Croatia to position itself on the issue of extradition of Americans to the ICC without losing the support of either American or European Union benefactors. These key issues may be the true questions when the Alliance considers Croatia's bid for membership.

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### **III. EVOLUTION OF THE CROATIAN MILITARY**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Croatian military in its modern form is a young institution. However, certain features can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century quest for Croatian nation-hood. While Croatia realized that nation-hood for a short time during the Second World War, the Ustaše regime lost it, along with the civil war, to forces led by Josip Broz Tito. Tito created the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and its Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) as multi-ethnic institutions. This quest for multi-ethnicity did not survive long after Tito's death in 1980 and the nationalist calls for statehood and the accompanying military to defend that statehood won the day. After declaring independence in 1991, the threat of war caused the birth of the Croatian armed forces (HV) and also paramilitary groups to defend the newly independent state. The Homeland War pitted the HV against the JNA and Croatian and Bosnian Serbs. The excesses and atrocities of the war had a profound effect on the armed forces. In addition, the HV came into being under an authoritarian government that used the war as an opportunity to wrest full control of the military. President Franjo Tuđman created a lasting legacy in the armed forces that is only slowly being reversed as the country has moved from authoritarianism to democracy.

This chapter will review the historical influences on the HV and their role in its evolution. These influences include: the establishment of the Ustaše-led independent Croatian state in 1941; the victory of Tito and the establishment of the JNA; the gradual political and military marginalization of Croats within Yugoslavia; the influence of paramilitary groups; the requirement to create the HV to defend Croatia in the early 1990s; and the effect of the Homeland War.

#### **B. CROATIA DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

The years leading up to the Second World War saw the rise of the Ustaše (meaning "Insurgents") in Croatia. It began as a secret nationalist organization that,

under the leadership of Ante Pavelić, sought the creation of a greater Croatia.<sup>1</sup> Pavelić was supported by Italian leader Benito Mussolini and German Chancellor Adolf Hitler. The coup against Regent Prince Paul in March 1941 brought a Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia and gave the Ustaše the opportunity they sought to create an independent Croatia. On April 10, 1941, on a day that the Nazis were sweeping through Belgrade, Pavelić's Ustaše established an independent Croatian state (NDH) as a protectorate for the Axis powers.<sup>2</sup>

The coup created a civil war within Yugoslavia setting the Ustaše, pro-royalist Četniks, and Tito's Partisans against each other. This fighting was extremely bloody for all sides in Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> The fighting of these groups was not simply for the independence of their countries but also due to an intense persecution of other ethnic groups by the Ustaše. The NDH's treatment of its Serbian, Jewish and Romany subjects, and of anti-Ustaše Croats, was so brutal and murderous that thousands flocked to the

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of "greater Croatia" can be traced back to the mid-1830s and then the revolutions of 1848. After Prince Metternich resigned as the Austrian Chancellor, demonstrations in Zagreb called for greater local control in Croatia. In addition, the Illyrian nationalists wanted a unification of Dalmatia and Slavonia, a charter of rights, annual meetings of the Sabor, abolishment of the Krajina (the frontier where the Austrians had fortified against the Turks in earlier centuries), use of the Croatian language in government service and education, the establishment of a Croatian army and the appointment of Colonel Josip Jelacic as the Croatian Ban (a term of nobility similar to prince). This desire for greater autonomy was supported by the Habsburg monarchy, which sought to use Croatian quest for equality with Vienna and Budapest as a way to maintain Austrian preeminence within the Dual Monarchy. Austria occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878. Serbia sought a return to the greater prominence that it had from the 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Serbia coveted Bosnia-Herzegovina as a key part of "greater Serbia" and saw Austrian occupation as delaying or denying the prospects of reclaiming that region. Serbia was convinced that it would be the Piedmont of the south Slavs and act as ideologue and leader of unification to which other south Slavs would defer. This position greatly angered Illyrian nationalists who argued that Croatia should establish its own state consisting of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thus began a rivalry between the two states over which would dominate and absorb Bosnia-Herzegovina into itself. "Greater Croatia" re-emerges in the 1930s as home rule was offered to a Greater Croatia encompassing parts of BiH, Dalmatia, Slavonia and the Krajina. While this agreement fell apart upon the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia, it was established against under the Ustaše and Ante Pavlevic. Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation forged in War*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, 82-6. Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*, New York, Penguin Books, 2001, 252-6. Spyros Sofos, "Culture, Politics and Identity in Former Yugoslavia," in *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe*, Jenkins and Sofos (eds), New York: Routledge, 1996. p 255-256. Jill Irvine, *The Croat Question*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993, 23-28.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Thompson, *A Paper House: The Ending of Yugoslavia*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1992, 266.

<sup>3</sup> Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to Ethnic War*, 2d Ed, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996, 200-201



resistance forces, especially the Partisans.<sup>4</sup> Pavelić's plan to purify Croatia was three-fold: convert 1/3 of Serbs to Catholicism, expel 1/3 from the country and kill the remainder. It was a plan that seems significantly influenced by Hitler's final solution, though not as organized. The methods used by the Ustaše to kill were primitive including the use of axe blades, ropes, and blunt instruments. These crude means were used even inside the concentration camps.<sup>5</sup>

The fascist leadership of Croatia militarized the society and set it on a quest for a greater Croatia. Pavelić, a puppet of the Axis, did not have full control over Croatia. In fact, German and Italian leaders initially did not want Croatia to develop any sizeable armed force and collected the majority of arms left in Croatia by the old Yugoslav army. The Ustaše had a limited militia (200-300) that it had brought from exile with Pavelić and they turned to the Civic Guards, a paramilitary organization of the Croatian Peasant Party, to conduct military tasks. After a period of time, the government was allowed a regular army (known as the Domobrans) and the Civic Guards were disarmed and replaced by the Domobrans and the Ustaše militia. For a period of months, there were also local Ustaše militias that were not under any control from Zagreb.<sup>6</sup>

The Germans allowed the creation of the Domobrans because they sought to use the units to fight the Soviets. Three Croatian regular divisions, led by German officers, were trained and equipped to be on the Russian front. Only one regiment ever made it to those battlefields due to the increasing threat posed by the Partisans. The units were used in Croatia instead and German units were sent to train and arm more Croatian units. At its height, in 1943, the Croatian armed forces amounted to 262,000 men. Of these 170,000 were under German command, leaving 92,000 under Croatian command. Of the units led by Croatians the largest group was the Ustaše Militia and Pavelić's personal guard at 28,500. The Croatian armed forces never functioned as anything more than an adjunct for the Wehrmacht. Whenever German forces were engaged in Croatia, the

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<sup>4</sup> Thompson, 266-7. Jožo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945*, Volume I, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975, 106.

<sup>5</sup> Thompson, 267

<sup>6</sup> The local militias often committed some of the worst atrocities, feeding on an intense nationalism with no direction from the leadership to direct their actions. Tomasevich, 106-7.

Croatian forces operated under German command.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the size of the Domobrans, it was not a good fighting force. Morale was low and the officers did not believe in the Axis cause and were not politically reliable. Many Domobran soldiers of all ranks were Partisan sympathizers and, later in the war, had plans to collaborate with the Allies had there been a landing in Dalmatia. The Ustaše Militia, on the other hand, was a party army composed of fully indoctrinated volunteers who were devoted to Pavelić. It was an excellent combat force but was undisciplined and unable to work with the Domobrans or the German commanders. Within Croatia, the Croatian leaders were given very little freedom of maneuver by the Axis. The exception to this was in dealing with the Serbian population and others that the Ustaše saw as threats. Thus, the Ustaše set its militia and the armed forces under its control on the only enemy that it was given the freedom to attack.<sup>8</sup>

The Ustaše battled the Četniks and Partisans in a civil war that the Partisans ultimately won.<sup>9</sup> However the animosity that was created during this time due to atrocities on both sides has remained in the post-war years to play upon nationalist feelings and to further ideas for greater Croatian autonomy within Yugoslavia or, conversely, Serbian dominance of Yugoslavia.<sup>10</sup>

### **C. THE MILITARY IN TITO'S YUGOSLAVIA**

After winning the civil war and playing a role in defeating the Axis in Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito sought to consolidate his power over Yugoslavia and its

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 107.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 318, 182, 108.

<sup>9</sup> As noted, the Ustaše were a Croatian fascist party that had come to power with the support of the Axis powers and with the goal of an independent Croatian state under the ideas espoused by those who sought a "Greater Croatia." The Četniks were a pro-royalist Serbian group, led by Mihailovic, that sought the continued existence of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia under the reign of the Karadjordjević family who was in exile in London. The primacy of the goal to return the Kingdom intact prevented the Četniks from being able to fight against the Axis, the Ustaše or the Partisans in the manner they would, tying their hands in tactics and objectives. The Partisans, led by Josip Broz Tito, were a communist organization that sought to bring about revolution to Yugoslavia and the establishment of a communist state. It drew its membership from each of the ethnic groups and proved itself to be the most effective fighting force in Yugoslavia. It defeated the Ustaše and Četniks and was very successful against the Axis powers, gaining control of the country as Axis forces regrouped and withdrew based on the Soviet advance in 1944.

<sup>10</sup> During the 1960s, Tudjman researched the number of deaths attributed to the Ustaše. He believed the Serbs had exaggerated the numbers of people killed for nationalistic propaganda and to inflame anti-Croat feelings within Yugoslavia allowing Serbs to forever label any movement for Croatian nationalism as "fascist" and thus continue to limit Croatian influence in Yugoslavia. Thompson, 268

military. He built the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) upon the foundation of the Partisan movement that he had created and led to victory. While consolidating his power, he also drove the Ustaše out of power in Croatia, driving many into Austria and destroying the rest.

Tito created the JNA to be a multi-ethnic force that represented all of Yugoslavia and was answerable to him as the Commander in Chief. The army looked to Tito for leadership and ideological foundation. Tito had emerged from the Second World War as the leader of a new Communist nation and the most trusted lieutenant of Soviet General Secretary Josef Stalin. He had liberated the country from the Axis powers, won a civil war and created a new state. His prominence in the Communist world was symbolized by the establishment of the headquarters of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) in Belgrade as a show of Stalin's gratitude for Tito's loyalty.

Tito's role as the ideological guide for Yugoslavia and the JNA became even stronger in 1948 when the Soviet Union expelled Yugoslavia from the Cominform. The specific rift between Tito and Stalin made him an even greater figure domestically and internationally. Tito became the leader of the non-aligned movement and played the Warsaw Pact and NATO against each other to gain economic and military support for Yugoslavia. After Stalin's death, Khrushchev in 1955 came to Belgrade (not Tito to Moscow) to rebuild diplomatic ties between the parties, and Tito insisted that any warming of relations would be done between the states and not through the parties. These events displayed the power and influence that Tito wielded. The Hungarian Revolution in 1956 brought heightened tensions to Soviet-Yugoslav relations. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 reaffirmed for Tito a need to keep free of the Soviet sphere of influence. These invasions identified a potential threat to Yugoslav sovereignty that the JNA must defend. Tito's vision of Yugoslavia and its place in the world provided the *raison d'être* for the JNA. Nearly ten years after Tito's death the archway over a JNA barracks in Sarajevo still read "Our future lies on Tito's path."<sup>11</sup>

Tito's death, however, had a profound effect on the JNA. Tito had been Commander in Chief for life of the armed forces, he took care of the armed forces and he

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 290

used them to pressure republics to submit to his will and a greater Yugoslavia. Since the 1980s however, the JNA was in decline, unable to meet goals for recruiting and retention and with a shrinking budget.<sup>12</sup> The high leadership never encouraged reform and tried to stick to Tito's path. The Chiefs of Staff saw themselves as the last guarantor of the SFRY's integrity.<sup>13</sup> They still wielded political influence through representation in republican assemblies and the Secretary of Defense (a professional military man) seat on the federal presidency. But the changes to Yugoslavia had brought diminished influence as the military budget was reduced and political influence was dependent on partnership with the unified League of Communists.

The JNA also saw the increasing movement toward greater autonomy and independence from the republics and feared that they would become an army without a state.<sup>14</sup> The JNA was also a bureaucracy that, like any bureaucracy was bound to be more centralized in its outlook and thus looked down on the increasing calls for independence of the republics. Those calls for independence included an anti-militarist slant in Slovenia leading to a campaign against military corruption and for recognition of the right of conscientious objection. The anger felt by the officer corps over these issues was accentuated by its ethnic makeup, which was nearly 70% Serb and Montenegrin.<sup>15</sup> National proportionality in the JNA was not an easy issue to resolve. JNA leaders saw the demographic trends that were leading to an increasingly unbalanced officer corps but had a very difficult time recruiting sufficient numbers of Slovenes, Croats, Albanians and Hungarians to serve. The reduced interest of young people to serve in the JNA, especially from the most developed regions (Slovenia and Croatia) meant that ethnic balance in the JNA was jeopardized and it increasingly came to be controlled by Serbs.<sup>16</sup> These officers saw in Slovenian and Croatian desires for independence the seeds of the

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<sup>12</sup> Almond, Mark, *Europe's Backyard War: The War in the Balkans*, Great Britain: Mandarin, 1994, 224

<sup>13</sup> Thompson, 291

<sup>14</sup> This is the repeated fear of Gen Veljko Kadijevic the Yugoslav Federal Secretary for the People's Defense. Martin Spegelj, "The First Phase, 1990-1992: the JNA prepares for aggression and Croatia for Defense," in Magas & Zanic, *The War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991-1995*, London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001, 22.

<sup>15</sup> Based on information as of April 1991. Thompson 291.

<sup>16</sup> James Gow, *Legitimacy and the Military: The Yugoslav Crisis*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1992, 76.

end of their nation (Yugoslavia) and their army as the protector of that nation. The JNA was becoming an army without a state.

There was a desire in the JNA to return to the certainties of Tito's Yugoslavia. The JNA sought the elevated place within the political framework that Tito had assured them, the certainty of a unified nation and the certainty of its role as the guarantors of Yugoslavia's sovereignty. To JNA leadership, Serbia seemed to be the only republic within Yugoslavia willing to provide the political will to keep Yugoslavia together. The desire for those certainties, led to the JNA increasingly becoming a Serb Army, first in the officer corps and then, after the war with Slovenia, throughout its ranks. The JNA also created a political party, the League of Communists, in December 1990 to help it play an independent role in Yugoslav politics.<sup>17</sup>

The armed forces of Yugoslavia were made up of the JNA and the territorial defense (TO) units that were controlled by the specific republics. These TO units are analogous to the national guard and are responsible to the leadership of the specific republic. In the late 1980s, the high command of the JNA underwent defense reorganization that was explained as streamlining the armed forces. This reorganization placed TO under federal military control, disbanded and reorganized the TO of Kosovo and disarmed the TO of the other republics that was outside army control. "The real meaning and purpose of this disarmament, carried out in May 1990, can be deduced from the fact that it was strictly carried out only in Slovenia and Croatia—of course, without the knowledge of the political leadership of those republics...The changes meant that the TO forces lost all effective connection with their own republics."<sup>18</sup> Restructuring of the TO units throughout SFRY removed any ties of a political-administrative region with military command borders.<sup>19</sup> In other words, those two republics had just been robbed of their armed forces and the ability to defend themselves from the JNA.

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<sup>17</sup> Branka Magaš, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia Tracking the Break-up 1980-92*, London: Verso, 1993, 341

<sup>18</sup> Stepjan Mesić, "The Road to War," in Magaš & Žanić, 10. TO units had been established to reinforce JNA and also conduct guerilla operations against an invader. Updated threat assessments through the 1970 and 1980s called for greater centralization to provide a more concentrated effort against invasion. This gradually led to less and less control by the republics, such that the change in the late 1980s while significant was not seen as politically motivated. Gow, 46-50, 98-102.

<sup>19</sup> Gow, 97.

#### **D. THE PATH TO WAR**

The years following Tito's death saw internal power struggles within Yugoslavia. Serbian leaders, accustomed to dominating the federation, saw their influence slipping away as other republics wanted to play a larger role in the decisions of the federation and barring that, independence. The infamous "Memorandum on Current Social Issues in Our Country" written by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1986 established a high standard for nationalistic rhetoric. The memorandum claimed that

Serbia was being exploited, and that the Serb nation suffered discrimination. They cited Slovenia and Croatia as leaders of an anti-Serb coalition and sought a solution in the physical separation of Serbs from other nations. At the same time they launched the ridiculous but insidious assertion that Serbia and the Serbs have always been victors in war and losers in peace.<sup>20</sup>

As Slovenia and Croatia began their planning for elections to be held in 1990, Serb nationalists seized upon this as further proof of the desire to build an anti-Serb coalition. Of course the resistance to Serbian leadership in the federation obstructed the goals of maintaining Yugoslavia intact (under Serbian dominance) or if that failed, creating a greater Serbia. The Serb nationalists (by this time the only ones left in positions of power after Milosević had purged the party) saw multi-party elections in Croatia as tantamount to a declaration of war.<sup>21</sup>

A program of intense anti-Croat propaganda began in Serbia charging that "ustasoid, neo-Nazi, fascistic, genocidal Croats" were going to take power in Croatia. The propaganda also alleged that "united Germany and Austria wanted, perhaps in combination with NATO, to smash Yugoslavia, finishing once and for all what they had attempted in 1914 and 1941."<sup>22</sup> After the elections in Croatia, Belgrade and the JNA worked to obstruct and provoke Tuđman and the government by working with radicals in Serb communities and providing direct military support to Serbs that blockaded their towns.

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<sup>20</sup> Magas & Zanic, 6

<sup>21</sup> Magas, 340

<sup>22</sup> Thompson 292

## **E. THE HOMELAND WAR: BUILDING AN ARMY**

After Tudman came to power, he began a series of reforms that were nationalistic in intent and fanned the flames of mistrust from the Serbs. His initial steps were to bring back signs of Croatia's past, such as the Croatian Coat of Arms on the flag. Many Serbs associated these symbols with the Ustaše and saw Tudman trying to recreate the regime that existed during the Second World War. Further, he sought to undo the over-representation of Serbs in civil service with a Croatization campaign, and rewrote the constitution to make Croatia the land of the Croatian nation and to make the Latin alphabet (used by Croats) the official language, prohibiting Cyrillic (used by Serbs) from official use.<sup>23</sup> In addition to those outward signs, Tudman goals included a greater Croatia created by partitioning Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) with Serbia and bringing the western part of BiH (with a large Croat population) to Croatia while giving the eastern half to Serbia.<sup>24</sup> All of these steps caused Croatian Serbs to call for secession from Croatia and they received the support of Milosević and the JNA, in addition to paramilitaries.

As Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia, portions of the Krajina declared their independence from Croatia. One of the leaders in the city of Knin was the police chief Milan Martić who had been dismissed as a part of the Croatization of the police force.<sup>25</sup> The Croatian government did not commit enough forces to be able to

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<sup>23</sup> The higher representation of Serbs in government goes back to historical over-representation of Serbs throughout the SFRY but more recently was based on a decision by Tito after the Croatian Spring in 1971, to ensure that Croatia would be kept in check by not having a monopoly of power within their republic. The "Croatian Spring" had its roots in the 1967 ouster by Tito of Yugoslav Vice President and Interior Minister Aleksandar Ranković who controlled the secret police. His loss of power set a shock wave through Croatia (and Yugoslavia in general) that Serb dominance through state mechanisms would no longer be accepted. In 1967, the Croatian Writers Club wrote a declaration on the state of the Croatian language, demanding that it no longer be dominated by Serbian in a Serbo-Croat language but rather become a 4<sup>th</sup> official language of the SFRY (Macedonian, Serbian and Slovenian were the others). A furor arose in which key Croatian leaders (including Tudman) were expelled from the party. This action only encouraged reformers whose main complaints were that there were too many Serbs in positions of power in Croatia (police, party officials and army officer corps), and that too much money was exported to Belgrade. The reform movement grew to include media, students and government leaders. Tito vacillated on his reaction to renewed Croatian nationalism but finally forced the resignation of all reformist leaders, arrest of media and student reformers and closure of the businesses that supported reform in December 1971. The JNA played an active role in persuading Tito to crush the Croatian reform movement. Tanner, 184-202. Gow, 24.

<sup>24</sup> Jenkins & Sofos, *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe*, London: Routledge, 1996, 267

<sup>25</sup> Thompson, 270

recapture this region. In large part, this is because the Croatians were outgunned.

Martin Špegelj, a retired General who had commanded the 5<sup>th</sup> Army and was soon to become Croatia's defense minister, had identified the methods the Serbs would use to disarm and then defeat Croatia. In 1990, he developed a plan to arm Croatia. He began to procure arms and to train people, such that by the end of February 1991, Croatia had succeeded in mobilizing and training 65,000 lightly armed soldiers.<sup>26</sup>

The Serbian plan for Slovenia and Croatia consisted of three phases: arm the Croatian Serbs in the Krajina; fight Slovenia under the guise of "Yugoslav Unity"; and conduct a frontal attack of Croatia.<sup>27</sup> After Slovenia declared its independence, it seized control of the borders with Austria and the JNA barracks in the republic. The JNA moved to fight Slovenia but were defeated in a ten-day war and afterward, fell back to Croatia and BiH. The lost battle with Slovenia had three consequences for the JNA: it brought about an anger at the inability to defeat Slovene forces; it renewed the JNA's determination to defeat Croatia as the more important of the two rebel republics; and it was an opportunity lost by Tuđman to stand with the Slovenes and defeat the JNA in a manner that might have saved later invasion.

In 1991, Serbian irregulars attacked Croatia, Slavonia and the Krajina. Rebels blocked roads and railways, and they broke into police stations and seized weapons. Croatian police laid siege to rebel villages. This gave the JNA the excuse it needed to intervene to "stop the conflict from escalating."<sup>28</sup> The JNA used Serb villages and JNA barracks as bases to attack Croatian communities. The JNA would move in to an area with paramilitaries in support, forcing Croats and Muslims to flee in front of them. Within two months of retreating from Slovenia, the JNA and Serb paramilitaries controlled one-third of Croatian territory and rampaged over another third. They faced resistance from some National Guard units that had been reformed and neo-Nazi militias (from the Party of the Right) that claimed to have 15,000 men under arms.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Magas & Zanic, 25.

<sup>27</sup> Magas, 341-2.

<sup>28</sup> Thompson, 261

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 294



The JNA had no war aim beyond punishing the enemy and surviving in a different and diminished form. It was unleashed without a strategic goal and guided by little more than hatred of Croats and fear of the future. “When General Raseta of the Fifth Army District (encompassing Slovenia and part of Croatia) told reporters, in October, that ‘We are aware we may lose our lives, but we are sure the republic of Croatia will not triumph,’ he summarized the entire strategic wisdom of his Chiefs of Staff.”<sup>30</sup>

Špegelj’s efforts however were coming to fruition. He was able to purchase a great number of weapons on the open market despite the arms embargo. This is because of the end of the Warsaw Pact meant that there was a large surplus of arms on the market. In addition, the Croats blockaded the JNA barracks in the country to prevent JNA from being able to continue to use them as staging areas. Eventually, Croatia gained control of those barracks, in part due to the help of JNA officers and NCOs who were sympathetic to Croatia. A large number of officers and men from the JNA had left the army during its march to Slovenia because they did not see the need to fight an internal enemy. This provided Croatia with a large number of leaders upon which to rebuild an army.

At the end of September, Croatian forces had occupied JNA depots and barracks and “acquired 250 tanks, 400-500 heavy artillery pieces, about 180,000 firearms and some 2 million tones of ammunition and other military hardware, which brought about a fundamental alteration in the balance of military power.”<sup>31</sup> Had Croatian forces not been able to gain control of these heavy weapons, it is unlikely they could have defeated Serbian forces and Croatia would have been reduced to a small sliver of its size.

## **F. PARAMILITARIES**

In Serb communities in Croatia and Bosnia, paramilitaries played a decisive role in the attempted secession from Croatia and the wars of the early to mid 1990s. Paramilitaries in Croatia were not as plentiful, but they played a significant role as well. The paramilitaries played the same role as others have at various times throughout the twentieth century, going back to the Civic Guards, as a part of the Croatian Peasants Party (which came into being with the party in the late nineteenth century). During the

<sup>30</sup> Ibid 294

<sup>31</sup> Magas & Zanic, 34.

Second World War, the Ustaše initially relied on the Civic Guards to provide order and fight the Partisans. Even when the Axis allowed the NDH to have an army, the Ustaše militia was the most effective unit the NDH had. This effectiveness was due to its ideological indoctrination and devotion to Pavelić.<sup>32</sup>

During the wars in the 1990s, there emerged two primary paramilitary organizations, the Croat Defense Council (HVO) and the Croat Defense Forces (HOS). Croats turned to these irregular units because the Croatian armed forces were initially unprepared and outgunned by the Serbs and simply were unable to come to the aid of Croat communities.

The HOS was an extension of the extreme right wing Party of Rights, which had been revived by Dobroslav Paraga. The Party of Rights was a fascist organization and HOS was its large paramilitary wing. Paraga dispatched HOS to fill gaps left by the National Guard. Paraga was also a challenge to Tuđman's power. The paramilitary's operations and excesses brought hostile criticism from the foreign press and Paraga regularly attacked the HDZ in press briefings. The HOS provided a large amount of the defense of the city of Vukovar explained below.<sup>33</sup>

Many Hercegovinian Croats had fought in the war in Croatia in 1991 and became seasoned fighters. After the January 1992 cease-fire they returned to their villages knowing that they would have to fight the Serbs again. In April 1992 they established the HVO as the military arm of the HDZ in Bosnia. The HDZ in Bosnia had very close ties to the party in Croatia and Tuđman had extraordinary influence in the actions of the HDZ in Bosnia. When the issue of the integrity of the Bosnian state was pressed, Tuđman removed the HDZ leader Stjepan Kljuić (who favored a unified, multi-ethnic Bosnian state) and replaced him with Mate Boban, a Hercegovinian who sought unification with Croatia. The HVO operated separately from the Bosnian Muslim army and frequently found itself at odds with the Bosnian government and its forces. This animosity and

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<sup>32</sup> This indoctrination and personal devotion is similar to the situation in Croatia's two "parent" states, Germany and Italy. In Germany, Hitler had his SA "brownshirts" and, in Italy, Mussolini had his "blackshirts" to provide the muscle they needed when they needed it. Eliot Cohen also writes of the importance of ideology to fighting units in *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime*, New York: The Free Press, 2002. 243-245.

<sup>33</sup> Tanner, 265-7.

distrust was exemplified by the creation of a Croat state within Bosnia, the Croat Union of Herceg-Bosna.<sup>34</sup>

Organized and directed from Zagreb, the HVO was for all practical purposes a subordinate command of the HV. HV General Janko Bobetko directed it through former HV officers reassigned to the HVO. The HVO was operating under HV command structure (the HVO main staff was an HV forward command post), Bobetko personally selected the first commander, and the HVO chain of command went back to Tuđman in Zagreb.<sup>35</sup>

The war in Bosnia brought the HVO and the HOS into direct competition for power and influence within the Bosnian Croat state. The specific backing of the HVO by Zagreb made the HOS a second tier force among Bosnian Croat militaries. When the rivalry between the groups broke into open confrontation in late summer of 1992, the HOS was at a distinct disadvantage that was made even larger by the death of the HOS commander and part of his staff in August. By the end of 1992, the HOS ceased to exist as an independent fighting force and it would play no significant role in the remainder of the war.<sup>36</sup>

Political leaders established the paramilitary organizations to make up for shortcomings of the regular army and to allow them more operational freedom. Paramilitaries are often willing to commit acts that a regular army will not due to ideological unity. While this statement is not unique to Croatia (in fact it could be applied to a large number of states in which paramilitaries have existed), the historical and contemporary existence of the paramilitaries, their ties to political parties and the use of the paramilitaries to influence events for the sake of the party have influenced the ideas concerning the proper role of the military and how a government provides direction and oversight. The use of paramilitaries emphasizes the authoritarian model for civil-military relations.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 286-7.

<sup>35</sup> CIA, 134.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 133-4.

## **G. HOW THE WAR SHAPED THE HV**

There were four key military actions and events that shaped the HV during the Homeland War. The first of these is the Battle of the Barracks, or the strategic offensive by the Croatian National Guard (ZNG) and the MUP against the JNA military facilities in Croatia. This effort was needed to try to create some military parity between the two forces. It pushed the war into a new phase, as Zagreb believed that it must close the gap before Croatia came under direct attack from the JNA. Prior to the attack the ZNG was unable to equip its combat units with the small arms necessary for all of their soldiers. After the attack, the units had a significant amount of heavy weapons with which to fight including armor, artillery and mortars. This also enabled the ZNG to form new and larger units that put it on a more level ground to fight the JNA.<sup>37</sup>

The Battle of Vukovar was the second important military event for Croatia.<sup>38</sup> The JNA had plans for a massive armored drive from northern Serbia, past Osijek and west across Slavonia to Zagreb and northeastern Croatia. While Vukovar was only militarily significant because the JNA wanted to free its barracks, and it became a focal point because the ZNG units and the HOS had fallen back there to regroup after withdrawing from an earlier fight. JNA and Serb paramilitary forces besieged this tiny town in eastern Slavonia. The town became a bastion of the Croatian defense, and it has sometimes been referred to as “Croatia’s Stalingrad.” The battle drew in the great majority of Serb and JNA combat forces planned for the main offensive. The inability of the JNA to seize the town from a group of seemingly rag-tag defenders heavily damaged the JNA’s morale and prestige. It also crushed its aura of invincibility, already greatly damaged by the short war in Slovenia. When the JNA had to resort to the use of massed firepower to seize the town, it became a public relations disaster, which further isolated Serbia from the west. The battle resulted in the utter destruction of the town, but “Vukovar carried

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<sup>37</sup> CIA, 109-110.

<sup>38</sup> The Battle of Vukovar marked a turning point in the war. It was idealized as Croatia’s Stalingrad to bring about the nationalistic feelings necessary to continue the fighting by creating heroes of the cities defenders who were greatly outnumbered. The staunch defense of the city by local militia against 40-50,000 JNA and Serb irregulars ended JNA hopes of conquering Croatia. Croatia did not have the armor or firepower necessary to break the siege of the city. However, many Croats felt that Zagreb did not do enough to relieve the city, and that Tudjman wanted to be able to point to the savage destruction of Vukovar to try to shame Western governments into coming to his aid. Vukovar was the clearest evidence of ethnic cleansing by Serbs for western media. Almond, 225-6. Thompson, 298-300.

out its military task extremely well, and in doing so clearly demonstrated that even a Serbianized JNA was incapable of resolving the crisis militarily.”<sup>39</sup> Vukovar “came to symbolize the war itself, highlighting the Croatians’ valiant efforts to break away from Yugoslavia and the federation’s determination to stop them by whatever means necessary.”<sup>40</sup> Vukovar fell on November 19, 1991. The time the battle took from the JNA prevented it from being able to link up with garrisons in Croatia and allowed Croatian forces to bring the offensive to a halt. Vukovar also galvanized Croatians for this war.

The third key event was the siege of Dubrovnik. Its importance lies in the political victory of international recognition and the further demonization of Serb forces rather than in military victory for Croatia. Dubrovnik was a historic tourist town on the southern most portion of the Dalmatian coast in Croatia. It had been a valuable port city as well and while JNA and Montenegrin forces isolated the city, they also looted and burned it. Then the JNA fired artillery into the city and destroyed some of the ancient architectural and religious buildings and works for which the city was famous. The international press took hold of this story and it further imbedded the idea of an evil Yugoslav/Serbian enemy that the Croatian armed forces had to fight against. The siege was eventually broken, in large part due to the international condemnation at the destruction of the city’s ancient churches and monuments that brought about international diplomatic recognition of Croatia.<sup>41</sup>

The fourth key event is the Western Offensive in August and September 1995 after the HV has been able to build itself up. This attack was the end of four years of frustration for Croatia at military defeat, ethnic cleansing and Serb occupation of Croatian land. As stated previously, the goal of the offensive was to regain the Krajina and parts of Central Bosnia that had been controlled by Serbs from previous attacks. The success of this offensive changed the dynamic of the war in Bosnia, led to a window of opportunity for diplomatic negotiations that brought about the Dayton Accords and provided a significant display of the tremendous improvements that had taken place in

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<sup>39</sup> Magas & Zanic, 35

<sup>40</sup> CIA, 110.

<sup>41</sup> Tanner, 261-264.

the fighting abilities and combat readiness of the HV. Within a period of just under four years, the HV had gone from a non-entity to special police units and national guard that could delay Serb offensives to a force that could conduct and win fairly large offensive campaigns that changed the strategic outlook for peace talks in Bosnia. These four events during the Homeland War were important in shaping the character of the HV.

## **H. CONCLUSION**

The Croatian military has been shaped by a cultural history that dates back to the 1941 establishment of the independent Croatian state. Axis limitation of and then control of the Domobrans led the Ustaše to turn to militia organizations to carry out its military will. They turned first to the Civic Guards of the Croatian Peasants Party and later to the Ustaše militia. The end of the war and Tito's victory brought an end to the NDH and the creation of the JNA formed from the Partisan movement. The JNA viewed itself as the guarantor of Yugoslav sovereignty and became an equal actor in Federation politics with the republics. While the JNA was established as a multi-ethnic organization, Serbs gradually dominated it. The JNA began to play an important role in political decision-making, as evidenced by their influence on Tito to crush the Croatian Spring of 1971. When Tito died, the SFRY lost its cohesion and as republics sought independence, the JNA saw its *raison d'être* disappearing. It sought the certainties of nation and mission that Tito's Yugoslavia had provided and believed that Serbia could provide them.

Upon its creation, the Croatian military quickly assumed an influential role in politics that had been played by the military in Croatia during the Second World War and that the JNA had played for Tito. "Unprepared and badly outgunned at the beginning, independent Croatia, despite an international arms embargo, gradually built up and trained a conventional military force employing Western advisers and, essentially, receiving Western encouragement."<sup>42</sup> Tudman used the military to legitimate his regime. He played upon the nationalistic feelings of a country at war. The historical and contemporary use of militias helped shape the HV into an instrument of the executive branch and the HDZ without the component of democratic oversight. And the waging of the Homeland War brought a military maturity to the HV (in the sense that it is a force

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<sup>42</sup> John Mueller, "The Banality of 'Ethnic War': Yugoslavia and Rwanda", prepared for delivery at 200 Annual meeting of the American Political Science Assoc, Washing DC, 31 Aug-3 Sep 2000, 34

that has learned how to be successful and has tasted success) yet continued to allow the absence of democratic oversight. The HV was beginning to play the role for the HDZ that paramilitaries had played in the past for authoritarian regimes.

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## IV. SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN CROATIA

### A. INTRODUCTION

The path to Croatia's future lies in the reform of state, economy and government. This reform is not limited to the armed forces, but also extends to the entire security sector. Security Sector Reform (SSR) is an idea that has come into being as academics have studied countries making transitions to democracy. They have seen that the requirements for democracy go beyond answering the question "who is guarding the guardians."<sup>1</sup> The study of post-communist countries in Eastern Europe and post-authoritarian countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America has shown the tremendous importance that the security of a society has on the ability of a state to develop a democratic infrastructure and market economy. Security for a democratic state requires not simply that the civilian government asserts control over the military, but also that it acquire the capacity to oversee a large spectrum of issues within the security sector. Security must deal not only with the potential external threats from nation-states but also with the internal threats posed by the political or cultural climate and the organizations within the state.

The advantage of thinking in terms of SSR is the ability to look at the problems of security in a comprehensive manner. Taken to its extreme, however, one could easily bring so many aspects of society into the security sector as to make it far too broad a field to study with any practicable application. The security sector should be seen along the lines that Max Weber identified as a state's monopoly of the use of legitimate force.<sup>2</sup> This use of force makes the security sector unique, and its direct relationship to the

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<sup>1</sup> SSR is an extension of the study of civil-military relations that is thoroughly discussed in the following books. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957. Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, Toronto: The Free Press, 1964. Hew Strachan *The Politics of the British Army*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime*, New York: The Free Press, 2002. Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, The Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II*, Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000. Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945*. London: Oxford University Press, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1946. 78.

government makes it answerable to the leaders who are moving toward democratic change. “The security sector of a state may be defined broadly as encompassing those elements that have been granted a legitimate and exclusive role in the exercise of coercive power in society to deal with external and internal threats to the security of the state and its citizens.”<sup>3</sup> When a question arises as to whether an organization or aspect of reform should be considered within SSR, those two factors (legitimate use of force and link to the government) should be seen as the litmus test for determining the factor’s relevance.

Given the legitimate use of force through the auspices of the government, it is clear that the security sector deals with more than just the military and a country’s Ministry of Defense. The country’s ministries of Justice and of the Interior, along with its border guards, will also fall into the security sector. Armed militias (an important consideration as we look at Croatia), if they are affiliated with the state, will also fall into this category. If the militia is not a state formation or is a criminal gang, it falls out of the realm of SSR and into one of law enforcement. Chanaa provides a broad list of possible organizations to include: “military and paramilitary forces; intelligence services; police forces, both national and local, together with border guards and customs services; judicial and penal systems; and the civil authorities mandated to control and oversee these agencies.”<sup>4</sup>

SSR deals with a “complex array of organizations, interactions and influences” that together affect the relationship between the legitimate use of force by the state and “issues of governance and security.” Its limitations lie in the tendency to group all possible issues that affect security (economic success, societal health, etc) into this category, making it such a large issue that it is impossible to study. Security sector reform can be thought of as “a holistic means of thinking about issues of security and development, and the role that organizations with the ability to utilize force can have on them...SSR...provide[s] us with a framework...[but] does not necessarily... target that

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<sup>3</sup> Jane Chanaa, “Security Sector Reform: Issues, Challenges and Prospects,” Adelphi Paper 344, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. 7. Strachan, 2, 8-9, 18-19, 44-73, 118-143. Cohen, 12-14. Hogan IX-XII. 1-22

<sup>4</sup> Chanaa, 7. Strachan, 15, 20-91.

thinking.”<sup>5</sup>

In examining SSR in Croatia, this chapter will approach the subject chronologically, looking at three periods in which the security sector has undergone reform. The first period is made up of the years of the Homeland War, 1991 to 1995. Next is the period of authoritarian consolidation under President Tuđman from 1995 to 2000. Finally, the current period is one of democratization, beginning with the elections of 2000 and continuing to the present. Within these time frames, four major dimensions of SSR must be examined: the political dimension; the institutional dimension; the economic dimension; and the societal dimension. The political dimension of SSR examines the nature of the control of the security sector. The goal is to reach not only civilian control but liberal, democratic, civilian control. That is, a democratic government must be able to exercise control over and provide oversight of the security sector. It does this by educating a cadre of officials who are well versed in security related issues and are thus able to bring expertise to the ministries of Defense, Interior and Justice. Further, security knowledge must be extended to the parliament (including the parliamentary opposition), non-governmental organizations and media, so that proper oversight and education can happen within civilian society.<sup>6</sup>

The institutional dimension of SSR deals with all state institutions that have responsibility for the “safety of the state and its citizens against acts of violence and coercion.” The reforms necessary here deal with developing the capacities of those forces in line with democratic ideals and the standards expected within liberal society. This includes choosing the proper size of the military, “disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of excess forces, as well as the building up of forces that are deemed insufficient to fulfill their roles.”<sup>7</sup> Professionalization of forces, the definition of proper roles and missions for military and law enforcement, judicial reform, border security and intelligence services all fall within the realms of institutional reform.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Timothy Edmunds, “Defining Security Sector Reform,” TCMR 1.11, London: Kings College London/Joint Services Command and Staff College, April 2001. <http://civil-military.dsd.kcl.ac.uk/TCMR%20Papers/TCMR%201.11.htm> (accessed 8 May 2003)

<sup>6</sup> Chanaa, p 28-29. Strachan 5-7, 20-73, 118-143. Hogan, 23-68, 419-462.

<sup>7</sup> Chanaa, 29.

<sup>8</sup> Chanaa, 29-30. Craig, 11, 25-26, 42-46, 393-4. Strachan, 20-43.

The economic dimension concerns the amount of national resources that the security sector requires to perform its duties. Specific budgeting appropriate for the size and missions of the security sector, and the transparency of that budget, are the keys to this area. The societal dimension deals with the role that civil society plays in the security sector. The civil community, media, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and research and advocacy groups have important roles for civilian oversight and ensuring transparency. These groups provide the additional checks and balances that are needed to encourage democratic control of the security sector.<sup>9</sup>

After examining each time period and the key dimensions above, the role of the international community in creating and reforming the Croatian security sector will be examined. It is important to take into account the effects that international pressure may have on helping or damaging the process of SSR in a country. There are also issues of interests and agendas that must be taken into account when looking at donor countries or organizations. Those donors often bring their own concerns that may not be fully in line with the goals of the recipient country. Disagreements over motivations and the objectives being sought can only hamper the success of SSR.

## **B. THE WAR YEARS 1991-1995**

The Homeland War was a struggle by the newly independent Croatia against violence within its borders, at the same time that the state was creating its own army and remaking its law enforcement. The Croatian Armed Forces (HV) were created from nearly nothing after the republic declared its independence. It found itself under attack from the much better equipped Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and also fighting a Serbian-sponsored secessionist movement of Croatian Serbs and paramilitary organizations in Eastern Slavonia and the Krajina. The Croatian leadership, in particular the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), sought to quickly build the armed forces to fight the Serbs and, in doing so, ensure the armed forces loyalty to the regime.

### **1. Political Dimension**

The process of creating the HV from scratch brought about a great deal of politicization, because the HV was built upon two pre-existing institutions: the Ministry

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<sup>9</sup> Chanaa, 30.

of Interior (MUP) forces and the Territorial Defense Forces (TO). These had existed in the Socialist Republic of Croatia and were responsible to the republic and its government rather than to the Yugoslav federal authorities. In 1991, the MUP created its own units “to counter the threats emanating from Serbia and Serbs in Slavonia and Lika. These forces ‘provide those functions that are not possible for the police and which do not fall under the general terms of military operations.’”<sup>10</sup> The TO had been partially dismantled by the federal defense reorganization of the late 1980s and thus was a shadow of its former self. Nevertheless, both organizations had a history and tradition of answering to the Croatian republic and its leadership. As Tuđman continued to make the HDZ the sole representative of Croatia and the state’s interests, the HV came to associate very closely with the HDZ.<sup>11</sup>

As Owen Greene points out:

The key challenge for democratic control...is not civil control over the military, but rather safeguards to prevent misuse of security sector agencies by civil political authorities, even if these political authorities are now democratically elected...Issues of security sector-civil society relations and enhanced parliamentary oversight need to be approached from this understanding.<sup>12</sup>

This misuse of security sector agencies and lack of parliamentary oversight were both hallmarks of the Tuđman regime in Croatia.

*a. Tuđman’s Methods of Control*

Croatia has always had strong, undemocratic civilian control of the defense sector, but since the election of President Franjo Tuđman in 1990 it was control of an authoritarian type. Tuđman exercised his control through three main instruments. First, he established a chain of command that bypassed Croatia’s constitutional provisions for command of the armed forces. He bypassed those constitutional

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<sup>10</sup> Alex J. Bellamy, “Like Drunken Geese in the Fog: Developing Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Croatia,” in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe: Guarding the Guards*, Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds and Anthony Forster (eds), New York: Palgrave, 2002. 178-9.

<sup>11</sup> In the spring of 1991, there was an intermediate organization created, the National Guard Corps (ZNG), that eventually grew into the HV. Central Intelligence Agency, *Balkan Battlegrounds: A Military History of Yugoslav Conflict, 1990-1995*, Vol I, Washington D.C.:CIA, 2002. 86.

<sup>12</sup> Owen Greene, “On Themes and Comparisons,” *Security Sector Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia*, Proceedings of the Third Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF)-ISS Workshop. London: ISS, 28 October 2002. 10.

provisions by using his executive authority to create a Strategic Decision Council (VSO) and also a National Security Committee (SONS). “The VSO was created in order to weaken any dissent from within the regime itself, and provide a veneer of legality to any extra-legal decisions by Tuđman.”<sup>13</sup> The President appointed all members of the SONS, allowing him to avoid any measure of parliamentary oversight. This created the situation in which the HV was answerable to Tuđman alone.

Tuđman’s second method of control was through the politicization of the security sector. He used members of his party, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), to fill many of the key positions in the military. This had the effect of encouraging party control and military loyalty. HDZ members of parliament held key HV posts, including “the Chief of the Supreme Staff, the Commander of the Osijek Military District (equal in size to an Army Corps), the head of the Political Directorate of the Ministry of Defense, and the Editor-in-Chief of *Hrvatski vojnik*, the country’s only military magazine.” Of these, a professional soldier occupied only the first. Consequently, military promotion and assignment to key posts was tied directly to loyalty to the HDZ. Tuđman thus assured that the entire chain of command would be politically reliable.<sup>14</sup>

The HDZ was also willing to use the HV as a political tool to help maintain control of the Sabor. During the pre-election campaign in the summer of 1992, the HDZ emphasized the role the ruling party had in the very creation of the HV. This public campaign was intended to link HDZ legitimacy with battlefield success of the HV. In fact, in January 1993, only two weeks before elections to the Upper House of Parliament, the HV launched a limited attack against Serb insurgents. They achieved partial success and the offensive was halted 10 kilometers into Serb held territory. The timing of this offensive suggests that some operations were being conducted for political benefit of the ruling party and not out of military necessity. The heavy HV casualties from this operation were kept secret for over a year.<sup>15</sup>

Through parliamentary procedures, claims of military secrecy and simple

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<sup>13</sup> Edmunds, “Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03,” 11.

<sup>14</sup> Ozren Zunec, “Democracy in the ‘Fog of War’: Civil-Military Relations in Croatia,” in Constantine Danopolous and Daniel Zirker (eds), *Civil-Military Relations in the Soviet and Yugoslav Successor States*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996. 224-5.

<sup>15</sup> Zunec, 226.

control of parliament, the HDZ ensured that the Sabor would be unable to debate any HV irregularities. This was done more to represent the HDZ as a ruling party than to protect the interests of the HV as an institution. Through this severe penetration of the HV by the ruling party, the HV had become a client of the HDZ. The danger here lay in a military that, because it was completely dependent on a specific political master, was more likely to be drawn into committing unprofessional acts. And “politicized armed forces can easily be used to further internal political competition and conflict.”<sup>16</sup>

In addition to having extensive control over the HV, Tuđman was able to bring the internal security services and intelligence services all under the control of the office of the President. He posted close HDZ allies to the MUP and appointed his son, Miroslav Tuđman, to head the intelligence services. After the Office of National Security was placed under presidential control, “all four intelligence organizations, anti-Yugoslav Intelligence (OBS), Military Intelligence and Reconnaissance (OSHV), Defence Ministry Intelligence (SIS) and Interior Counter Intelligence (UINS), were directly controlled by the President.”<sup>17</sup>

The third method that Tuđman used to politicize the security sector was through payoff incentives or patronage. In this form of corruption, HDZ members in key positions were able to “enrich themselves and gain social prominence as long as they towed the party line.” Investigations since the new coalition government came to power have uncovered the distribution of state-owned housing to loyal officers at below market prices, embezzlement and fraud of the defense budget, and promotion or shares in privatization plans were available for those Tuđman especially trusted.<sup>18</sup>

The politicization of the armed forces was intended to help legitimize the Tuđman regime. The HDZ had campaigned on a platform of nationalism and independence. The control and loyalty of the HV, the heroes of the Homeland War, made a powerful statement that the party continued to imbue the spirit of that nationalism. Placing HDZ members in key posts also gave the appearance of civilian control of the military, and thus of democratic practice. This is not to say that there was not some

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 227.

<sup>17</sup> Bellamy, 179

<sup>18</sup> Edmunds, “Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03,” (unpublished paper), 12.

substance to the democracy. After all, the HDZ did lose control of the Presidency and Sabor in the 2000 elections, and the armed forces did not attempt to reverse this result

## **2. Institutional Dimension**

In examining the institutional dimensions of the security sector during the war years, one must acknowledge that the overriding need for armed forces to defend the country limited the steps taken, or even considered, to provide clear guidance for professionalization requirements, or to deconflict roles and missions between the HV and other security and intelligence services.

### ***a. Size, Roles and Missions***

With Croatia under the threat of attack, the country needed forces to fight against the Serbs. Even though Tuđman and Špegelj discussed defense issues and how to create the armed forces, the overwhelming need to put men into the ranks overcame the desire to develop and use a comprehensive plan for the creation of the HV. The HV recruited from all walks of life in Croatia because there was not a large enough pool of soldiers from which to draw. A small cadre of former JNA soldiers did exist and joined and there were also Croatian members of the JNA who deserted the army instead of fighting against fellow Croats. Due to the limited size and the initial lack of capabilities of the Croatian armed forces, Croatian leadership also resorted to the use of paramilitaries to conduct some of the fighting and augment the new force and private contractors to help train the new force as noted in chapter III. The mission of the armed forces was very simple, to expel the JNA and Serb paramilitaries and restore the territorial integrity of Croatia. There could be no practical thoughts of going further with a roles and missions debate until the security of the state was assured. In the end, Croatia cobbled together a military that was 200,000 troops and made up of 64 brigades.<sup>19</sup>

### ***b. Professionalization***

As noted above, Croatia did not have a large pool of soldiers. This meant that recruiting was a reactive process that searched for anyone physically able to meet the needs of the armed forces. Recruitment standards are the first step in ensuring professionalism within the military, the relative lack of standards due to necessity meant that Croatia was starting in a poor position. There were a limited number of former

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<sup>19</sup> Zunec, 220.



soldiers available, but they were established as unit cadres to help develop a chain of command. There was no military education system in existence. All of those facilities had been maintained at the federal level in Yugoslavia. There was a significant politicization of officer billets and key community figures (and HDZ supporters) were made high-ranking officers out of a need for senior officers despite a lack of military experience. This patronage led to further politicization of the armed forces. In summary, Croatia had limited resources, equipment, materials, budget and qualified personnel. The need for a force of the size necessary to meet the JNA and Serb paramilitaries superceded the acknowledged need for a system of professionalism.

### **3. Economic Dimension**

The immediate nature of the creation of the Croatian armed forces did not allow for a careful evaluation of the strategic goals for the defense of the nation nor for a debate about the resources that would be devoted to defense. While it is certainly reasonable that the regime's first priority was to ensure the existence of the newly independent republic, the Tudman government took steps that "created a non-democratic culture within the HV and the defence ministry that persisted long after the threat had disappeared across the Danube."<sup>20</sup>

#### ***a. Resources and Budget Transparency***

The covert arms purchases made necessary by the arms embargo established over the whole of Yugoslavia in 1991 strengthened the non-democratic culture. General Martin Špegelj was in charge of the weapons procurement and he found willing sellers in Germany and among elements of the Soviet Army. He spent some \$400 million, money that was never accounted for, buying arms. This established a precedent that procurement policy was conducted beyond democratic scrutiny. It also blurred the lines of civilian control since Špegelj balanced between the world of party, state and military.<sup>21</sup> This secrecy allowed Croatia to begin significant operations in Bosnia without the Sabor authorizing or performing any portion of oversight. It was also through this web of secrecy that financial and weapons support was established for the HVO. This support was crucial in allowing the HVO (and later the HV) to fight Serbs in

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<sup>20</sup> Bellamy, 184.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 184-5.

Bosnia. Thus Croatian defense spending had no oversight and there was no budget transparency. Špegelj used government funds to procure weapons and he also used funds sent from the Croatian Diaspora. This allowed no mechanism for true oversight even if the Sabor or another organization would have been in a position to do it.

#### **4. Societal Dimension**

During this period, civil society was not heavily involved in the security sector except for the obvious role of providing the men and women as soldiers and policemen. In this relative societal vacuum, the key player within civil society was the organized crime element. As identified above, corruption and patronage played key roles in the politicization of the HV. This is in part due to some of the historical influences written of in chapter three. The need for absolute loyalty within nationalist political parties has the tendency to bring to power a small group of people. When that political party gains power and has to fill the bureaucratic offices of government it relies on people who are indoctrinated in its ideology. Those like-minded people are often family or very close friends because they are the only ones who are fully trusted to carry out the plan. That brings into nepotism and patronage to the highest levels of government. It also means that this personal trust is the most important issue amongst leadership and that there is little oversight provided to prevent the misuse and abuse of power. The existence of paramilitary wings in political parties created another vehicle for patronage and also for enforcement of the ways of the party. The paramilitaries provided a more palatable employment option for many people than other forms of labor. These paramilitaries lead to the development of an insidious form of organized crime that was highly connected within government, the military and society. The leaders of the organizations were influential with political leaders and often contributors of money, resources and personnel that helped get politicians and parties elected. Their origins as militias also meant that these criminal organizations were very well armed. The influence of these criminal organizations is, along with veterans' organizations, an obstacle to cooperation with the ICTY.

### **C. AUTHORITARIAN CONSOLIDATION 1995-2000**

During the post-war Tudman years, Croatia became “the showcase of ‘tyrannical majority’ in democratic transition.”<sup>22</sup> When free multi-party elections were held in Croatia, they were held as proof positive for the strength of the democratic institutions there. But what was actually occurring was

not democracy, but democratic centralism, since once a decision was brought by the majority of the votes, it must be universally observed without demur, and there is no follow-up to the democratic procedure. The democratic part is realized and concluded by the vote. After the vote, centralism takes over...To reduce democracy in Croatia to free multi-party elections is to apply the logics of democratic centralism to the entire society.<sup>23</sup>

While western countries viewed the Tudman dictatorship with increasing wariness little seemed to be done concretely to get him to change his behavior. Despite “repeated warnings, the Croatian leadership has not complied with the internationally accepted rules of democracy. The ambivalent Western behaviour towards Croatia has been expressed in the matter of its membership of the Council of Europe: Croatia was to be admitted as a full member in 1996, then this admission was postponed because of the continued violations of political and human rights.”<sup>24</sup>

#### **1. Political Dimension**

After the end of the wars in Croatia and Bosnia following the Dayton Peace Agreements, the HV took on a more obvious role in domestic politics. The HV became even more highly politicized. While neither the HV nor other security services physically intervened in domestic politics, they were often used to legitimize the regime. “The politicization of the security and defense structures during the Tudman period was not the result of Croatia’s legal framework for civil-military relations. It stemmed from an underdeveloped political culture on the part of the political decision-makers and an

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<sup>22</sup> Attila Agh, *Emerging Democracies in East Central Europe and the Balkans*, Cheltenham, UK Edward Elgar Publishing, 1998. 195-6.

<sup>23</sup> Vesna Pusic, “Dictatorship with Democratic Legitimacy: Democracy versus Nation,” *East European Politics and Society*, vol.8, no.3, Fall, 383-401 as cited in Agh, 196.

<sup>24</sup> Agh, 196.

absence of professional ethics on the part of the soldiers.”<sup>25</sup> Highly placed HDZ officials within the MoD, when confronted by military officers who disagreed, often resolved those disagreements by dismissing of prominent military professionals who expressed differing opinions than those of the regime.<sup>26</sup>

The HDZ also used the military to create powerful lobbying interests that would provide “independent” views on the direction of government or military issues. The most significant of these groups is the Croatian Veterans' Association (HVIDRA). “During this period of consolidation, HVIDRA publicly defended the regime whenever it was criticized by the international community or opposition parties. This served to legitimate the constant refusal to cooperate with the ICTY or fulfill international demands for the return of Serbian refugees to Croatia.” By using HVIDRA, the Tuđman regime was able to greatly influence Croatian public opinion so that they disapproved of the ICTY’s activities and believed that it should not have jurisdiction to investigate the alleged war crimes.<sup>27</sup>

After the war ended, Tuđman sought to identify any opposition to the HDZ as being anti-Croatian and a threat to the peace and stability of the country. In 1995, elections in Zagreb should have brought to power a mayor from the opposition, but Tuđman used his emergency powers to block that candidate and instead install a HDZ loyalist. Tuđman justified this move as necessary to prevent a candidate that would bring instability to Zagreb. “The message here is unmistakable. Not only is an attack on the HDZ an attack on the Croatian state, but the President insisted that opposition could not be allowed, implying the coercion could be used to suppress the opponents of the HDZ.”<sup>28</sup>

While the HV was not used to intervene in domestic politics, the MUP and intelligence forces were. “MUP forces were used to suppress protests and curtail the activities of the media. The intelligence services were deployed in a similar fashion.” In

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<sup>25</sup> Zvonimir Mahecic, “Democratic Control and Oversight of the Croatian Security Sector,” Security Sector Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, Proceedings of the Third Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF)-ISS Workshop. London: ISS, 28 October 2002. 15.

<sup>26</sup> Bellamy, 181.

<sup>27</sup> Bellamy, 181.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 181-2.

fact, the use of these forces within domestic politics was so great that even members of the HDZ were targeted. In 1998, the defense minister, Andrija Hebrang, discovered that the SIS had been wire tapping his phones and were actively trying to undermine him. He was at odds with Tudman because he was a moderate member of the HDZ, and he sought to balance the defense ministry's budget and bring the ministry out of heavy debt. When a party hearing cleared the SIS of any wrong doing, Hebrang resigned in protest.<sup>29</sup>

## **2. Institutional Dimension**

### ***a. Promotion.***

Due to political penetration, the promotion system was heavily politicized such that HDZ interests were represented at every level in the promotion system. This created a promotion system filled with political patronage and clientalism. These factors, when combined with a tendency to promote officers and appoint them to key staff positions on the basis of battlefield success, led to a top-heavy military bureaucracy that lacked the necessary expertise for staff work and necessary reform.

Croatia's defense and security bureaucracies were closed institutions. The lack of an objective system for career development and ensuring objective career records denied the MoD the ability to review of an officer's competence to hold a key position on the General Staff or in the MoD. These issues combine to severely limit the effectiveness of the personnel system to assign the right person to the needed job. This then contributes to those key positions being dominated by patronage. Promotions within the HV generally were granted through HDZ affiliations, or through battlefield experience gained at an operation level during the war. Since Tudman's death, many of these practices persist and have become some of the most persistent barriers to long-term reform. These methods of promotion lead to the dual problems of officers being appointed to positions in the MoD that require education and experience that they simply don't have to effectively fill that billet. Secondly, promotion through battlefield success tends to make it nearly impossible to have objective career records and performance evaluations, thus making it extremely difficult for the administration to properly choose an officer that is best suited for a particular position.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 182.

<sup>30</sup> Edmunds, "Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03," 18.

### **3. Economic Dimension**

The economic dimension of SSR during authoritarian consolidation continued the same patterns as had been established during the war years. There was no budgetary oversight from any agency. Budget transparency was an illusion. And patronage through a system of payoffs for HDZ loyalists continued.

### **4. Societal Dimension**

Croatian society had a difficult time trying to create SSR in the societal dimension. Tuđman had co-opted the civil community by continuing to use security forces to enhance his legitimacy. The HDZ had control of all of the media in Croatia, having been placed there through a system of cronyism. As explained above, veterans organizations acted as apologists for the HDZ policies, limiting their ability to provide oversight to those government policies. Tuđman was unable to fully consolidate his power in the societal dimension and dissent did exist, though it moved underground. The best evidence for this is the opposition victory at the polls in 2000.

## **D. DEMOCRATIZATION 2000-2003**

### **1. Political Dimension**

Since assuming power in 2000, the government of Prime Minister Ivan Račan has faced the problem of trying to depoliticize the armed forces. By depoliticizing, they must neutralize “HDZ influence within the Croatian defence sector and [implement] a restructuring process to consolidate its mechanisms for democratic control of the military.” While it has not been an entirely smooth process, it is notable that “for all its politicization and penetration by the HDZ regime, the HV remained in its barracks during Croatia’s political transition.”<sup>31</sup>

The problem of depoliticization rests as well in identifying a strategy to rid the HV of the influence of the HDZ without spreading the perception of repoliticizing the armed forces. Upon coming to office as Defense Minister in 2000, Jožo Radoš began with two techniques to purge the MoD of the HDZ. First, he fired seven deputy defense ministers stating:

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<sup>31</sup> Timothy Edmunds, “Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03,” 14-15, 12.

We intend to discontinue the practice of political activity within the Croatian Army...officers and civil servants within the Ministry of Defence will be allowed to belong to political parties but not to hold party functions. Our aim is to have experts in key positions of the Ministry of Defence.<sup>32</sup>

His second step was to audit the finances of the ministry. As stated earlier, one of the methods that Tuđman had used to maintain the loyalty of HDZ officials in the MoD was to allow them to gain financially from their postings. The military budget had not been fully disclosed and, in fact, a large part of it remained classified. This was not due to military necessity but rather due to corruption. “Much of this classified expenditure...was spent supporting the activities of political appointees rather than core defence activities.” An audit of MoD vehicles found that the ministry owned 2,300 cars while the armed forces only required 200-300.<sup>33</sup>

A key event that shows both the extent of HDZ influence in the officer corps and the commitment to the process of de-politicization in the current Croatian government occurred in September 2000. The government, acting in support of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), arrested 12 suspects (including two HV generals) on suspicion of war crimes. The HDZ encouraged opposition to the government within the HV, and twelve general officers wrote an open letter to the government critical of its policies and accusing it of slandering of war heroes. President Mesić reacted swiftly to remove each of those generals from service and ensuring the primacy of civilian control of the armed forces. Concerning his actions, Mesić said that “whoever wants to be in politics has the right to do so...But while they are in the army they will not be publishing pamphlets.” Mesić was very clear that the armed forces must be depoliticized.<sup>34</sup>

***a. ICTY and Opposition from HVIDRA***

Another key part of cooperating with the ICTY has been the contentious issue of turning over the former Chief of Staff General Janko Bobetko. Bobetko had

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<sup>32</sup> “Interview with Jožo Radoš, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Croatia,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, vol. 33, no. 16, 12 Apr 2000.

<sup>33</sup> Bellamy, 182-3.

<sup>34</sup> Bellamy, 183. Importantly, those generals were not simply fired for their comments but instead were pensioned off active duty.

been indicted on charges of war crimes committed by his troops during the Homeland War; however, the Croatian people see him as a war hero and repeated polls have shown their reluctance to see him turned over to the tribunal. President Mesić initially came out strongly against turning over Bobetko to the ICTY, to the displeasure of Europe and the United States. He softened his stance slightly by saying that the 81-year-old general was too sick to stand trial, a position supported by doctors reporting to the ICTY. Bobetko's death in May 2003 rendered the issue moot, but the problem will come alive again as the ICTY calls for other former HV officers to be held accountable for war crimes. Mesić will have to choose between cooperating with the international community, and potentially losing the political support necessary for re-election, or refusing to hand over accused war criminals, a stance that polls say is backed by a majority of the Croatian people. The HDZ has made this an important political issue and will attempt to use any miss-step from the government to ride back into power. An option that may provide some political cover for the government is shown in the recent trial of a former army General Mirko Norac and three other defendants in a Croatian court. The government negotiated with the ICTY to have jurisdiction on these cases and the jailing of three of the four defendants seemed to prove a great deal about the credibility of the Croatian judiciary and its ability to handle such cases.<sup>35</sup>

The influence of the HDZ through HVIDRA also continues to be a problem for the current government. While HVIDRA acted as an apologist for the HDZ while it was in power, it has disrupted and criticized the coalition government of Prime Minister Račan. For instance during the summer of 2000, in protest for the government's proposal that all veterans receive the same pension, HVIDRA members blocked roads and harassed shipping. The ideology behind this was that HVIDRA would not allow veterans of the Homeland War to be lumped into the same category as veterans of the Second World War, which would include people who had been Partisans under Tito.

There is continued concern over the politicization of the armed forces even within the current government. President Stipe Mesić was elected on a platform that pledged to reduce presidential power. He has been slow to take the necessary steps.

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<sup>35</sup> Reuters, "Croatian General jailed for war crimes," ISN Security Watch, 25 March 2003.



In fact, instead of consulting Defense Minister Radoš (a member of a different political party), he imposed his own choice for Chief of Staff. Several months later, a member of Radoš' party tried to undermine this decision by suggesting that he had been invited by the ICTY to provide evidence implicating Mesić's choice for Chief of Staff in war crimes.<sup>36</sup> Even as government's change and democracy takes hold, the temptation to make appointments for high offices part of a political game is high.

***b. Constitutional Problems***

The civilian chain of command is problematic. The President is head of state and nominates the Prime Minister to create a government. The Prime Minister chooses the cabinet including the Defense Minister, through whom the President exerts his power as commander in chief. If a conflict exists between the Defense Minister and the President, the President can ask parliament to dismiss the minister through the use of a no confidence vote on the Defense Minister.<sup>37</sup> From that moment until parliament has reached a decision, the president can command the armed forces directly through the Chief of the General Staff.

The president is unable, constitutionally, to propose laws to parliament regarding any issues. This is particularly important in the areas for which he is constitutionally responsible: security, defense, foreign affairs and intelligence. This creates a gap between the responsibility of the president in dealing with these issues, and the authority necessary to act effectively. Obviously it is important that the president and ministers of defense, foreign affairs and interior are able to work together for the sake of SSR. This constitutional problem is one that leaders must work through despite the system instead of working within the system.

**2. Institutional Dimension**

***a. New Strategic Context***

Croatia recognizes that the country is living within a new strategic context. The threat of invasion from Serbia and Montenegro is no longer the pre-eminent security concern. The issues that are in the forefront are downsizing the HV, the shrinking

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<sup>36</sup> Bellamy, 184.

<sup>37</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, 1990 as amended 28 Nov 2002. Section IV, Articles 99, 115.

defense budget, the need for cooperation between the MoD and the Ministry of Interior and the professionalization of the force. All security issues are now viewed in the context of partnership with NATO, and of providing forces for peace support operations beyond the territorial confines of Croatia. To create such a force, one of the first items to review is the size of armed forces. Croatia's armed forces, currently at 51-53,000 are far too large to be sustainable for the reduced threat and the desire for modernization. Figures for right sizing identify 20-25,000 as the target size for the HV. There are great political risks for downsizing and HVIDRA again shows its influence in this arena. Croatia has been fighting a high unemployment rate. Putting an additional 20,000 to 30,000 people out of work through downsizing could be very damaging politically for the government.

The professionalism of the HV is a key issue, and is currently being addressed in a couple of ways: first through the expansion of professional military education (PME); second through recruiting, which includes a reconsideration of the future of conscription. Through PME, Croatia can shape the officers currently in their ranks and provide them the knowledge and expertise necessary to deal with issues such as modernization, transparency and downsizing that will define the future of the HV. Bilateral agreements have allowed for the training abroad of many officers in Western Europe or North America. The recruiting process is central to the ability to professionalize. The higher the quality of individuals that a country can bring into service, the better that service will be. Force reduction necessarily brings into question the requirement for conscription, and different variants of all-volunteer or pre-dominantly volunteer force have been examined.

***b. Modernization and Restructuring***

As a part of that challenge to move beyond the wartime and authoritarian concept of security threats, brings about the need to restructure and modernize. An audit conducted in 2000 found that more than two-thirds of defense spending was on personnel. Those costs reflect the considerable manpower and the high level of conscription within the HV. The high level of spending on personnel issues allows very little money to be available for equipment modernization. The necessary money for modernization must be freed from personnel obligations. Proposals to allow re-allocation of funds include reducing the compulsory service from ten to six months and cutting the

professional soldiers by one-third (9000 to 6000). These strategies would cut the overall force by one-third, thus freeing some money. Other reform ideas include consolidating the operational centers to gain some economy of scale; a military education system linked to civilian education; pay and retirement reform; and improving soldiers' quality of life. The defense support of the United States and the PfP program has been considerable in helping these issues. The United States even donated several F-16s to Croatia to aid in the modernization of the Croatian air force.<sup>38</sup>

### **3. Economic Dimension**

The Croatian security sector is working within an era of shrinking budgets and increased demand for accountability. The troubled state of the Croatian economy with high unemployment and only recently recovering from the downturn in tourism suffered from the wars in the Balkans, demand that the security sector be extremely good stewards of the funds to which they are entrusted. Croatia must deal with the legacy of high defense spending and how that has colored the view of officials who work within the procurement departments. The bureaucratic memory of available money or "slush funds" is hard to defeat until you have undergone training and grown past that generation of bureaucrats. As noted, a very large percentage of spending is on personnel for pay or pensions. The most direct route to gaining back the resources needed for modernization and restructuring is to reallocate from personnel to research and development or procurement. However, domestic politics gets in the way and the public is very concerned about ensuring that the government fulfills its moral responsibility to the soldiers who defended the country from conquest or destruction by the Serbs.

### **4. Societal Dimension**

Within civil society there are few instances of active interest in security affairs, apart from intense public scrutiny of Veterans Affairs, which includes a concern that the government, while reducing the armed forces, pays proper respect to those who have served. This has led to parliamentary and public resistance to the reform agenda. "In a dynamic political transition, parliaments often become a last bastion for representatives of the 'old order'. In the short term, strengthening parliamentary control and oversight

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<sup>38</sup> Bellamy, 188-9.

may empower those who are determined to block desirable SSR.”<sup>39</sup> The HDZ manipulation of the ICTY for political purposes distinctly shows this. There is also considerable public misunderstanding of NATO political requirements, which hampers the government’s ability to get its true intentions into the open where they can be reviewed.

There is a lack of civilian society engagement and expertise on defense matters in Croatia, overall. For civilian oversight to work, there must be a cadre of people who have a working (and sometimes more detailed) knowledge of the problems that occur in the security sector and who have educated themselves concerning the issues. Since 2000, civil society engagement in defense has expanded. There have been a series of courses developed to help enlarge the pool of applicants who are able to provide knowledgeable oversight of the security sector inside and outside government. The next challenge becomes recruiting people to attend the courses and developing the civic mindset necessary to make people aspire to such tasks.

#### **E. ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

The problems in the Balkans, and in other conflict torn areas around the world, require assistance from the international community to provide guidance, manpower, expertise, financing and security. In Croatia the incentives for internal reform come from its desire to join international organizations such as the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, as well as from the international demand that it comply with the ICTY. These motivations for change fall into the categories of defense assistance and conditionality. Defense assistance has come in the form of bilateral and multilateral cooperation focusing on security reform. "Conditionality is most easily defined as the policies or conditions that a country is asked to fulfill, either explicitly or implicitly, before it is accepted as a candidate or member of NATO" or other international organizations.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Greene, 11.

<sup>40</sup> Simon Lunn, "International Assistance, Conditionality and Security Sector Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia," in Timothy Edmunds (ed) *Security Sector Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia*. London: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, 28 Oct 2002, 42.

## **1. Defense Assistance**

During the Tudman era, the United States was heavily involved in providing security assistance to Croatia. This occurred indirectly at first, through the use of a private military company, Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI). Even though it was essentially outsourcing this service, there were many ties between MPRI and the U.S. government through the use of retired military personnel and they had the support and approval for their activities in Croatia from the State Department. MPRI's license prohibited them from providing a tactical component to the training they gave the Croats so as not to violate the 1991 UN arms embargo.<sup>41</sup> While it has been working with the Croats, MPRI has developed and implemented four separate programs to help modernize and reform the HV. These programs are: the Republic of Croatia Democracy Transition Assistance Program (DTAP); the Republic of Croatia Democracy Transition Long-Range Management Program (LRMP); the Republic of Croatia Army Readiness Training System (CARTS) Program; and the Croatian-MPRI Program. DTAP is a multi-year program to provide leadership and management training for the HV. It also led to a review of the professional military education system. LRMP focused on developing a national military strategy, and on long-range defense planning and policy formulation. CARTS built upon the DTAP and LRMP to create a system to analyze, evaluate, and validate readiness throughout the army. Finally, the Croatian-MPRI program assisted and supported the MoD and the General Staff in meeting the requirements outlined within Partnership for Peace (PfP) and NATO membership, and in preparing the military to engage in peace support operations.<sup>42</sup>

MPRI allowed the United States to engage Croatia at a time when more direct links were difficult due to the authoritarian nature of the Tudman regime. This engagement allowed the United States to show support for Croatia against the aggression of Milošević's Serbian forces and to attempt to limit the destabilization of the Balkans. Although the use of a private security contractor provided the United States flexibility in supporting Croatia within the framework of applicable UN resolutions, there are many

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<sup>41</sup> Edmunds, "Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03," 50-1.

<sup>42</sup>Information from Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI) website, [http://www.mpri.com/subchannels/int\\_europe.html](http://www.mpri.com/subchannels/int_europe.html) (accessed 17 May 2003)

concerns about privatizing security sector reform. Can a private company ensure the requirements of international law are maintained while working with the client state that is fighting for its survival? Many critics say that MPRI actually set back the development of the democratic process in the Croatian military. They believe that the technocratic solutions offered by such groups give the impression of great change due to organizational differences while they lack the change in attitude and impression necessary to reform an organization. Critics also point to the success of the HV in 1995 and say that the success is due to MPRI training that exceeded its mandate and did conduct tactical training. There is also the question of whether an organization that is staffed and led by retired military personnel is best suited to assist in depoliticizing the military in order to assure democratic accountability and transparency.<sup>43</sup>

Since the Dayton accords, the United States has been able to provide more direct support to Croatia including through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which superseded the assistance that MPRI had previously given. IMET funding to Croatia grew from \$65,000 in 1995 to \$500,000 in 2000 and the total over that period was about \$2 million. Despite being a relatively small investment for the United States, this assistance has allowed Croatia to restructure its armed forces to meet peacetime needs. Croatia has established four goals for its foreign training programs: develop a civil-military system that ensures the proper role for the military in civil society; a professionally trained military capable of sustaining its own training; an effective, efficient resource management system; and complete system interoperability with NATO. To reach these goals with IMET, the Croatians have established their training priorities: senior level schooling; strategic planning and policy; defense systems planning and procedures; and training and doctrine. “The IMET Program in Croatia is regarded by many as the most significant and successful U.S. and Croatian engagement tool...The Croatians support the IMET program with two dollars of their money for every dollar dedicated to it by Congress....[which] has effectively tripled the size of their program, making it one of the largest in Europe.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Edmunds, “Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03,” 51.

<sup>44</sup> Richard B. Liebl, Marin Braovac and Andrijana Jelic, “Security Assistance programs: The catalyst for transition in the Croatian military,” DISAM Journal of International Security Assistance Management, Wright-Patterson AFB, Spring 2002. 5-9.

Since 1995, more than 300 Croatian students have traveled to the United States and hundreds more have been trained through Mobile Education and Training Teams (METTs) that have visited Croatia. The program has touched every sector of the general staff and ministry of defense. Croatian soldiers have used this training as a catalyst for changes within the armed forces for traditional military skills and resource management as well. IMET has also heavily supported English language training, which is a major Croatian objective toward the accession to NATO under the Membership Action Plan. The English language facilities that have been built and the faculty that is staffed with IMET funding are capable of producing 150 fluent English speakers annually. The United States also supports other programs such as the Marshall Center in Garmisch, Germany for higher security and defense learning where Croatia has sent more than 40 members of its MoD and general staff for training. The U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation and the U.S. Agency for International Development contribute money and training for humanitarian assistance, helping provide the infrastructure necessary for Croatian forces to rebuild from the devastation that remains from the war years.<sup>45</sup>

These programs, in conjunction with German and British programs have greatly helped move the HV toward the standard expected that allowed consideration from NATO for Croatia to become a partner within PfP and to then be invited to the Membership Action Plan. Part of this success was due to the United States and other Allies holding Croatia responsible for making good use of the personnel that they send to be educated. This means that they are posted to jobs within the MoD, or other ministry, where they can take their expertise and use it for the benefit of the Croatian armed forces and the country as a whole. These are programs that continue to pay dividends.

## **2. NATO Opportunities**

The opportunities that cooperation with NATO and admittance to the PfP and MAP have provided for Croatia are extremely important. These programs include military exercises with NATO members and partners, military education opportunities such as language training, military education seminars, and resident professional education in military schools in Alliance member countries. The increased coordination

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<sup>45</sup> Kristan J. Wheaton, "Cultivating Croatia's Military," NATO Review Vol. 48, No. 2, Summer-Autumn 2000, 10-12. Liebl, et al, 5-9.

with member militaries gives the HV goals toward which to move in terms they can recognize, rather than simply as goals stated in documents.

Croatia has participated as often as possible in PfP sponsored exercises and missions to prove that they will be a strong member country. They have done this by providing personnel and support for United Nations peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone, Eritrea and Ethiopia. The HV has used the positive feedback from these missions to raise its international profile as a force that actively contributes to peacekeeping and international security. These missions also give Croatia the opportunity to show the progress that it is making toward compliance with NATO standards. In 2002, Croatia also hosted the PfP sponsored regional fire fighting exercise "Taming the Dragon." The success of the exercise provided another example of Croatia's desire for membership. Numerous bilateral exercises with U.S. forces have also provided opportunities for education and learning techniques, tactics and procedures necessary for interoperability.<sup>46</sup>

### **3. Conditionality**

Conditionality has been an important part of NATO's expansion since the countries of Central and Eastern Europe began to desire membership. That membership would be conditional on each country's progress toward political, economic and military reforms as spelled out in the 1995 NATO Enlargement Study. The criteria are general and not specific<sup>47</sup>, however, so progress is sometimes difficult to assess. The models offered by member countries are not consistent, and there is no single measure of effectiveness. And finally, "NATO as an organisation was hardly equipped to judge levels of democratisation, unlike, for example, the Council of Europe."<sup>48</sup>

The greatest specificity is available in the area of defense, where NATO has a great deal of expertise and there are specific measures of effectiveness that can be used to evaluate results. PfP has been helpful in moving partners in the direction of reforms, and in providing assistance. PfP does not, however, impose strict conditionality, since

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<sup>46</sup> Lord George Robertson, speech to international conference on "Regional Stability and Cooperation: NATO, Croatia and South-East Europe," Zagreb, Croatia, 24 June 2002.

<sup>47</sup> This lack of specificity can lead to "criteria creep" where the target goal continues to move on a country and that country feels as if it will never be able to fulfill the membership criteria. In addition, the lack of specificity can bring about the perception that NATO demands are unreasonable. Edmunds, 56.

<sup>48</sup> Lunn, 42.



participants choose the areas they work on and the pace at which they progress. The MAP has been a considerable improvement in identifying the necessary reforms for membership and establishing a more achievable plan for assessing progress. With MAP, "conditionality became much more explicit and specific." Among other countries, Croatia was required to fulfill a series of tasks prior to entering PfP and becoming a part of MAP because "the international community has seen their quest for membership as a lever to bring about internal reforms and changes of policy that will help stabilise the region and in particular, hold together the Dayton accords." <sup>49</sup>

Conditionality has been used for four purposes with Croatia. The first is to encourage the government to "get its house in order." In other words, put democratic institutions and practices in place, ensure the rule of law and respect for human rights -- including cooperation with the ICTY. The second purpose is to encourage friendly and stable relations with neighboring countries. The continuing support and implementation of the Dayton accords belongs in the area. Next is for Croatia to contribute to peace support operations and participate in PfP exercises by way of preparation for membership. Finally, conditionality has been used to get the armed forces to move away from its isolated, politicized, unaccountable past and toward a future with a reformed HV under democratic control.<sup>50</sup>

Pre-conditionality has been used most often with Croatia, in order to insure that it actually meets the membership criteria of NATO before being invited to join. While acknowledging the positive effect pre-conditionality has had on moving Croatia toward reform, it is important to understand the obstacles that it presents. Its influence may ultimately be limited regarding politically sensitive issues. This is particularly the case in dealing with the ICTY and trying to force a politically fragile government to make this policy work and explain it to a public that "remains largely ill-informed about the requirements of NATO accession and defence reform." The second obstacle is that pre-conditionality's success is dependent on the Croatian government being in favor of membership in NATO. The current government is strongly in favor, the opposition is using NATO pressure as a campaign tactic against the current cabinet with the next

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 43.

<sup>50</sup> Lunn, 43-4.

elections in 2004. “Under these circumstances, making and implementing hard decisions over pre-conditionality reform goals may become increasing problematic.” Finally, there is the fear that pre-conditionality focused on specific targeted reforms will not take into account the holistic nature of SSR that is its essence. In so doing, Croatia could point to specific successes that it has made without even dealing with larger systemic problems.<sup>51</sup>

Direct conditionality “has taken the form of threats to withdraw incentives from or inflict punitive measure on [a] state if [it does] not implement particular policies or obligations.”<sup>52</sup> It can also be characterized as being imposed upon a country from outside. The explicit use of direct conditionality has been limited with Croatia, but it has certainly played a role with the ICTY. Tudman’s obstruction of the ICTY contributed to Croatia’s exclusion from institutions such as the World Trade Organization, the Central European free trade Association (CEFTA), PfP and the EU’s PHARE aid program.<sup>53</sup> The current government’s declaratory policies concerning the importance of NATO and EU membership, which includes cooperation with the ICTY, made Croatian entry into international organizations possible. Croatia joined PfP in May 2000, the WTO in November 2000, MAP in May 2002 and CEFTA in March 2003.<sup>54</sup>

Conditionality may also provide political cover for a government that is under domestic pressure. Owen Greene suggests that “the broad incentives associated with reforms that move a country towards closer association with EU and NATO are generally more flexible than the term ‘conditionality’ usually implies. It is more appropriate...to insist on due process in decision making (including appropriate inter-ministerial and parliamentary review and wide consultation) than it is for them to attempt to direct the specific content of the reforms.”<sup>55</sup> In other words, the ability to work directly with decision makers and the creation of institutions, which provide democratic transparency and accountability, may be the condition that is truly required, even if the results are not immediate.

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<sup>51</sup> Edmunds, “Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03,” 57.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>53</sup> Bellamy, 189.

<sup>54</sup> Edmunds, “Defence Reform in Croatia and Yugoslavia, 2000-03,” 58.

<sup>55</sup> Greene, 12.

There are dangers associated with conditionality. It can distort a country's policies in an effort to please outsiders. A country may alter domestic spending priorities, allocating more money to defense out of a desire to quickly meet NATO requirements. This altered spending may distort a country's progress towards a market economy.<sup>56</sup> Even within the defense budget, conditionality may lead to decisions concerning weapons systems or recruitment designed solely in order to appeal to alliance interests. At the same time, the public may come to believe that changes (and accompanying hardships) are being forced upon them by external pressures divorced from domestic conditions. A great deal of resentment can build and lead to an opposition movement that plays to nationalist tendencies and reasserts the independence of the country. This is very similar to the tactics that the HDZ is currently using to try to take support away from the coalition government.<sup>57</sup>

## **F. THE PATH AHEAD**

### **1. Expanding Civilian Oversight Capacity**

The only true method for gaining true reform is to empower the people of the country where reform is needed. Croatians must want to make the reforms work and then set about putting them into effect. Now that reform has begun it is important to continue to expand the oversight capacity of Croatians throughout the society. This is necessary so that the public debate over security issues can be expanded and the level of expertise can rise. The dialogue and debate must also take into account methods for monitoring the reform and periodic evaluations to ensure that it continues on the correct path. This exists currently with the PARP between Croatia and NATO, but it would also be valuable within the country itself. Additional methods for helping engage society include practical courses in security studies and administration in the universities; exchange visits between Croatian and foreign legislators to discuss parliamentary committee; and the training of civilian defense experts.<sup>58</sup> These steps have been taken in Croatia as the University of Zagreb has created undergraduate and graduate level courses to train civilians in defense

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<sup>56</sup> Increased defense spending to meet perceived NATO requirements for modernization have the perverse effect of making a country less likely to meet EU membership standards because its defense spending as a percentage of GDP rises above the target number.

<sup>57</sup> Lunn, 44-5.

<sup>58</sup> Chanaa, 69-70.

management and the security sector, in addition to the training that Croatians continue to receive through the IMET program. Exchange visits have been a part of PARP and the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe of which Croatia is a part and also at the recent Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management.<sup>59</sup>

## **2. Managing Corruption**

Croatia has also understood the danger that corruption and organized crime can pose to its reform efforts. Anton Tus has identified Croatia's main security challenges as being terrorism, organized crime and mass migration. These concerns all relate to high levels of unemployment and instability.<sup>60</sup> In an unstable environment, there is a greater likelihood of corruption and a return to the system of patronage described above. The key within the security sector is to identify and progressively eliminate the pockets of power that exist beyond the government.<sup>61</sup> This is something that the Račan government has had some success in accomplishing and there is reason to be optimistic for further success. The Croatian administration and President Mesić have recently conducted a number bilateral and multi-lateral talks to bring a regional approach to stopping organized crime and corruption, and also purging the police force to rid it of corruption.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> The Ohrid Conference on Border Security for the Western Balkans (22-23 May 2003) brought together four partner organizations (NATO, EU, OSCE and the Stability Pact) to bring agreement on common goals. The three key political goals were: open but controlled and secured borders in the entire region; promoting further stabilization allowing closer relationships among the countries; and using advancements and techniques for military reform and applying them within security sector reform. Common Platform of the Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management, 22-23 May 2003.

<sup>60</sup> Anton Tus, Interview with NATO Review, Summer 2002.

<sup>61</sup> Chanaa, 71-73.

<sup>62</sup> RFE/RL Newsline 18 June 2002, "Croatian President Ends Bosnian Visit," <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2002/06/180602.asp> (accessed 3 June 2003). RFE/RL Newsline 5 Sep 2002, "Belgrade seeks cooperation on organized crime," <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2002/05/090502.asp> (accessed 3 June 2003). RFE/RL Newsline 27 Sep 2000, "Some 100 sacked in purge of Croatian Police," <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2000/09/270900.asp> (accessed 3 June 2003).

## **G. CONCLUSION**

Security Sector Reform is vital to securing Croatia's future as an integral partner with the rest of Europe. The political legacy of the Tuđman regime created a highly politicized military. This happened due to the creation of the HV based on organizations that had been responsible to the state and party (TO and MUP), and through a strategy of penetration and corruption at the highest levels of the MoD. The circumstances of war allowed for much of this initially to be done without much opposition. After the war, Tuđman embarked on a period of consolidation that cemented the framework he had established in order to help legitimize the regime. The post-Tuđman era of democratization has been marked by de-politicization, greater transparency in decision-making, and a focus on properly shaping the force for the new strategic context.

In the early 1990's, Croatia was faced with creating an armed force from virtually nothing. The result was a very large mobilized force that lacked professionalism and expertise. SSR has led to a strong emphasis on professionalization, downsizing and modernization. The key pieces to this have been a change of roles and missions established in the National Security Strategy of 2002.

Weapons procurement in Croatia began as an attempt to arm the country while bypassing the UN weapons embargo on Yugoslavia. The secretive nature of this program was the starting point for defense expenditures that were kept out of the public eye. There was no oversight provided from the Sabor and certainly no budget transparency. This led to a blank check mentality that brought the ability for Croatia to undertake operations without Sabor authorization or oversight. The movement toward NATO has pushed Croatia toward much greater fiscal accountability and budget transparency. The troubled economy puts restraints on the budget on the high and low sides. It will not allow a greater expenditure for defense in relation to other governmental programs, but it will also not allow the greater cutbacks that could be gained from downsizing due to the already high unemployment rate.

The societal dimension of SSR has been steadily improving. Under Tuđman, the secrecy of the security sector allowed for very little societal input into the policies. The HDZ helped create veterans' organizations that acted as apologists for Tuđman defense

policies. These organizations continue to play an important role in Croatian domestic politics toward security policies. Democratization has brought about a greater role for civilian oversight, though there remains a dearth of civilian expertise in key ministries, the media, and non-governmental organizations.

The international community has played an important role in helping shape SSR in Croatia. Through the tools of defense assistance and conditionality, countries and organizations have been able to use a carrot and stick approach to bring about reform. The Croatian desire to be accepted in the international community, especially the organizations that represent Western Europe and political and economic progress (EU, NATO, and WTO) has prompted the government to implement changes desired by those countries and organizations. The quest for reform becomes more problematic when dealing with the Croatian public. Military downsizing and cooperation with the ICTY for high-profile figures are two issues that require a sensitive approach from outsiders. The movement toward complete acceptance of the conditions may come slowly but the progress will be made by working with the key decision makers.

Ultimately, the decisions to make fundamental reform must come from Croatia. The long-term approach to this reform must be based on creating the civilian expertise in society and the necessary capacity to maintain that expertise. Establishing an education system that integrates security topics within civilian schools allowing the discussion of security sector reform to reach a much wider audience will create that expertise. Establishing incentives for people to get into these programs, once created, will do this as well. The creation of this cadre of experts and ensuring that they are put in positions to make use of their expertise will be the measure of success.

## V. CONCLUSION

Croatia seeks to join the North Atlantic Alliance and other Euro-Atlantic structures. Its candidacy is in keeping with the 1999 enlargement of the Washington Summit and the 2002 invitations at Prague Summit. To understand the civil-military obstacles to Croatian membership in NATO, it is important to look at some of the historical factors: the re-emergence of nationalism, the influence of paramilitaries, the politicization of the Croatian armed forces and its historical predecessors and the influence of the Homeland War.

Tudman used the military to legitimate his regime and the used the military as an extension of the executive branch and the dominant political party, the HDZ. War brought military expertise to the soldiers but not to any of the political leaders who wished to provide any measure of democratic oversight.

Croatia's future lies in security sector reform as a comprehensive way to review the problems of the security sector and an understanding that without security, movement toward democracy and free market is greatly hampered. Looking at security sector reform since Croatian independence, one can see a pattern form. During the War Years, Tudjman created a security infrastructure that was solely responsible to him. He used a multi-pronged approach to accomplish this. He established extra-constitutional organizations to control the HV and avoid parliamentary oversight, and he politicized the military by penetrating it with HDZ members at all key positions. He provided a patronage system that allows for party members to enrich themselves while working with the Ministries of Defense and Interior.

The immediate nature of military build up and the need to fight the war did not allow for extensive education of leadership and a subsequent low level of military professionalism ensued. Economic dimension of the security sector was deliberately hidden from any method of oversight. This included a covert weapons procurement program, payment of party members and of paramilitaries. Civil society played little role in the security sector except to provide the members of the army that was fighting.

During Authoritarian consolidation the pattern was solidified, the HV and MUP

were used to intimidate opponents and civil support for the HDZ was rallied by the creation of veterans' organizations. Tudman created methods to work around the chain of command. He ensured that military promotion and assignment was tied to party loyalty. He further assured loyalty within the MoD through patronage.

During the period of democratization, the new Croatian government understood that there existed a new strategic context within which the security sector must operate. This new strategic context deals with the threats of terrorism, organized crime and mass migration instead of the fear of external attack. The first effort to deal with this new context was a campaign to de-politicize the security sector. Concurrently, the government began to cooperate with the international community to support the ICTY. It revised laws to provide proper oversight of the security sector. They recognized the need to modernize and restructure the armed forces to come more into line with the standards established by NATO, but have been confronted with the economic issues that deal with restructuring. Specifically, the disproportionate percentage of security budget tied to personnel that prevents the implementation of a modernization program. The moral dilemma of cutting personnel addresses the responsibility the government has toward those who fought in the Homeland War against the need to downsize.

The international community has played a vital role through defense assistance and establishing conditions for membership. IMET has been a highly successful American assistance program and the opportunities provided by NATO through PfP have greatly increased their exposure and understanding of the necessary reforms. Croatia has shown great enthusiasm in being a part of these exercises and missions and has shown leadership in hosting them. Conditionality has been closely associated with the ICTY and Croatia's compliance and cooperation with the tribunal. The compliance has been mixed at best due to public opposition to jailing war heroes. It has its limitations but when used narrowly, it can serve a valuable purpose. The path ahead for Croatia is centered on the establishment of a cadre of civilian security sector experts, and the capacity to train further generations of such experts, who are then able provide democratic oversight of the military through work in the MoD, the Sabor, non-governmental organizations and the media. Croatia has also sought membership in multi-lateral and regional organizations to fight corruption and crime throughout the Balkans. The links between organized crime



and the security sector must be broken if Croatia is going to be able to take full control of its path toward membership.

The political environment in which decisions of NATO membership are made will be the most important factor in a membership decision. The United States remains the indispensable ally in the Alliance and, as such, wields the key vote on invitations to join the alliance for any new members. The strategic context that NATO is now dealing in is one of a world where terrorism is the greatest threat and the Alliance is moving toward out-of-area missions that require an expeditionary force. The political context is that NATO members want to ensure that Croatia is following through in its promise to capture war criminals, and the United States is establishing bilateral treaties with states to prevent American personnel from being indicted by the International Criminal Court. The mixed record of turnover of indicted war criminals to the ICTY and the regional differences between Croatian prosecutions of the suspects brings suspicion from Europe as to Croatia's willingness to follow this through. The ICC is an issue of particular political importance for Washington in 2003. Croatia has been conducting a balancing act, in trying to please the European Union, which opposes such bilateral treaties, and pleasing the United States. The U.S. Congress established a law that prevents any military assistance from going to any country that does not sign the bilateral treaty concerning the ICC. Croatia, despite its admirable work toward SSR, may make the political mistakes concerning the ICTY and the ICC and may lose the key sponsorship of the United States in its bid for NATO membership.

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## **VI. GLOSSARY**

ANP:	Annual National Plan
BiH:	Bosnia-Hercegovina (Bosnia I Hercegovina)
CEFTA:	Central European Free Trade Association
HDZ:	Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica)
HOS:	Croat Defense Forces (Hrvatske Obrambene Snage)
HV:	Croatian Armed Forces (Hrvatska Vojska)
HVIDRA:	Croatian Veterans Association
HVO:	Croat Defense Council/Bosnian Croat Army (Hrvatska Vijece Odbrane)
ICTY:	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IMET:	International Military Education and Training
IPP:	Individual Partnership Program
JNA:	Yugoslav People's Army (Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija)
MAP:	Membership Action Plan
MPRI:	Military Professional Resources Incorporated
MUP:	Ministry of Internal Affairs
NAC:	North Atlantic Council
NACC:	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDH:	Independent Croatian State (Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska)
OBS:	Anti-Yugoslav Intelligence
OSHV:	Military Intelligence and reconnaissance
PARP:	Planning and Review Process
PfP:	Partnership for Peace

SFRY:	Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia
SIS:	Defense Ministry Intelligence
SONS:	National Security Committee
SSR:	Security Sector Reform
TO:	Territorial Defense Units (Teritorijalna Odbyana)
UINS:	Interior Counter Intelligence
VSO:	Strategic Decision Council
ZNG:	Croatian National Guard (Zbora Narodne Garde)

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